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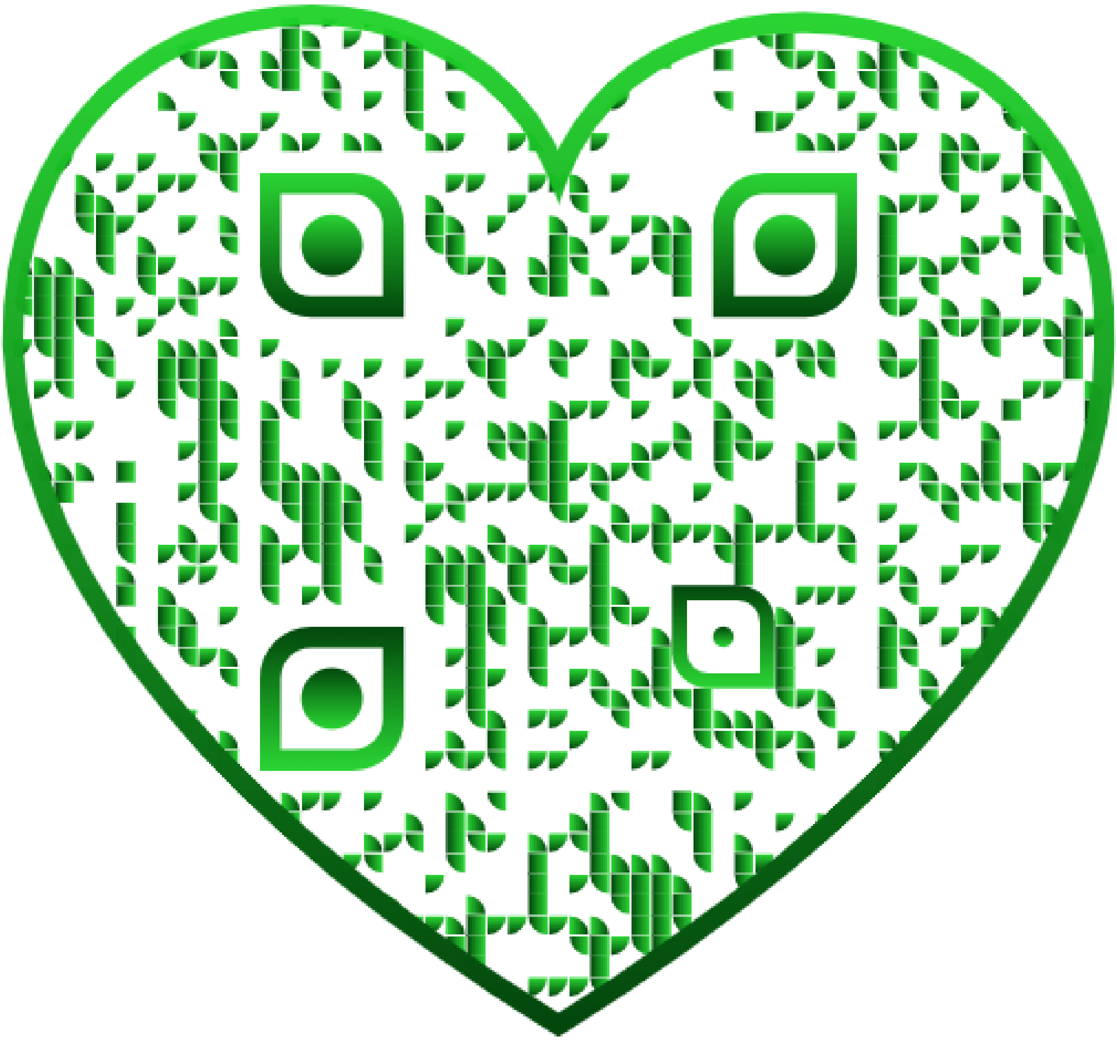

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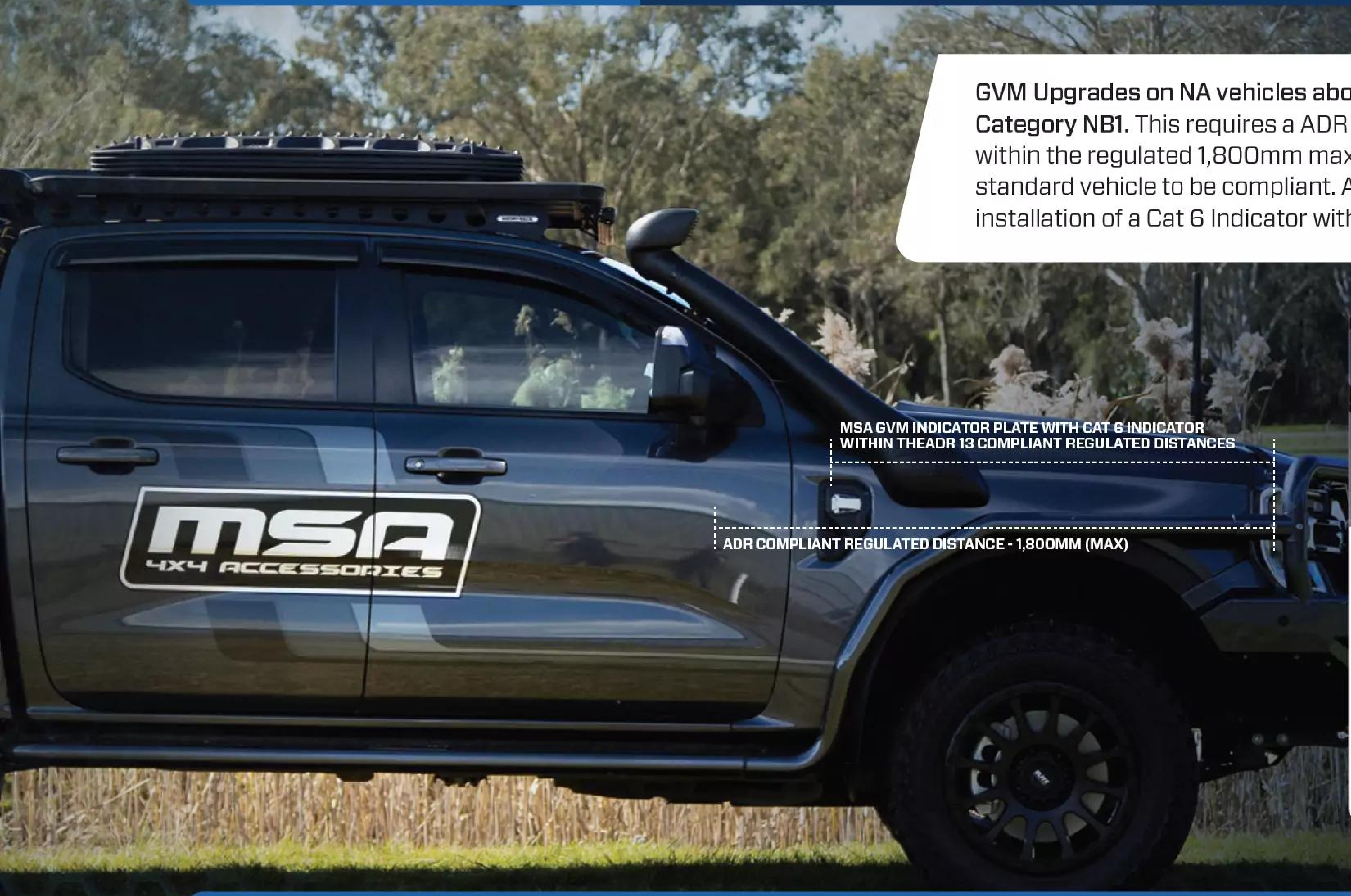
MSA 4X4 ACCESSORIES
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# 4WORD

### MATT RAUDONIKIS

# IS DIESEL DEAD?

When it comes to 4x4 touring in Australia, diesel has long been the fuel of choice. There are plenty of reasons for this preference: old carburetted petrol engines in Series Land Rovers, Land Cruiser FJs and G60 Datsuns were prone to vapour lock whenever the mercury climbed towards 100°F, leaving you stranded in the heat; carrying petrol in jerry cans was always riskier than carrying diesel; and diesel delivers greater torque, efficiency and touring range for the same volume of fuel.

In more recent times, the arrival of factory-built turbo-diesel engines delivered even more grunt and improved fuel economy, making them especially appealing to long-distance travellers.

Toyota has long offered LandCruisers with a choice of petrol or diesel powertrains, but as modern diesels improved in both performance and efficiency, the petrol options steadily fell out of favour. The LC200 was the last model sold here with both fuel types, but Toyota Australia eventually dropped the petrol variant due to a lack of demand.

At the time, Toyota was selling eight to 10 times more LandCruisers than Nissan managed with its Y62 Patrols, month after month. The Y62 is a great wagon – I've always loved driving it – but being petrol-only, it never came close to matching the Cruiser's sales.

So it caught my attention when Toyota's sales and marketing boss, Sean Hanley, said at the reveal of the LC300 Hybrid that he doesn't see much of a future for diesel in Australia beyond the next decade.

Toyota is hedging its bets on future fuels every which way, with BEV, EV, ICE, hydrogen and hybrids all represented in its showrooms. Hanley says there's no single perfect fuel for every application, adding: "At Toyota, we are committed to a multi-pathway approach to decarbonisation, providing appropriate powertrains for different applications."

While the Performance Hybrid petrol LandCruiser is just one of those pathways, there will be many more. Hanley sees hydrogen taking over from diesel as the fuel of choice for heavy vehicles and other applications where diesel has long been king. This would require significant infrastructure to store, transport and deliver the fuel across the country, not to mention changes to the vehicles themselves. Toyota Australia is already investing heavily in this space, but there's still a long way to go.

I find it hard to believe we'll see this change within the next 10 years, but there will no doubt be shifts along the way. What I am sure of is that I'll still be filling my LandCruiser with diesel at remote outposts in outback Australia for the rest of my days.

Matt

4X4 AUSTRALIA

"4x4s, the places you can take them, and the gear to get you there"

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# FORD TEASES ACCESSORIES FOR 2026 RANGER SUPER DUTY

## FORD HAS CONFIRMED A SUITE OF HEAVY-DUTY, FACTORY-BACKED ACCESSORIES FOR THE UPCOMING RANGER SUPER DUTY

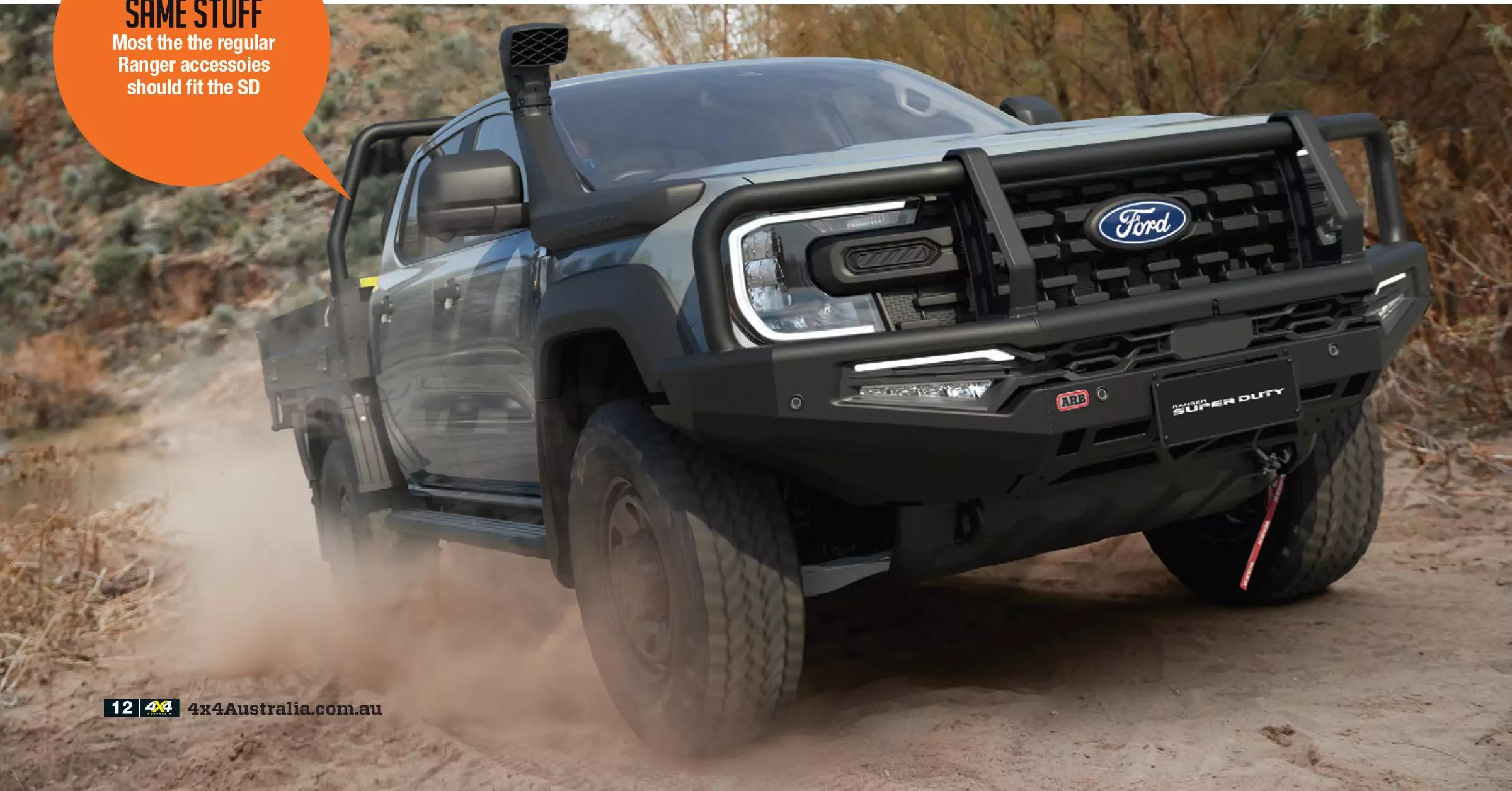
Ford has unveiled a range of factory-backed accessories for its Ranger Super Duty in the lead up to its release early in 2026. The equipment includes a heavy-duty steel tray, ARB bull bar, Warn winch and bundled packs designed for farm work, job sites and off-road use.

The accessories, engineered to work with the Super Duty's chassis electrics and safety systems, can be fitted at the dealer before delivery and will come with a five-year warranty when installed by an authorised Ford dealer. Ford has also revealed full specs for the Ranger Super Duty.

At the centre of the range is a purpose-built steel tray designed for heavy-duty loads. It comes with a headboard, quick-lock drop-sides, anti-rattle latches, integrated taillight protectors and 400kg-rated lashing rings. The bolted construction reduces chassis stress compared with welded trays, while a dedicated mount kit – tested at Ford's proving grounds – is rated to handle heavy Super Duty payloads. The tray also features moulded mudguards and quick-lock hinges.

Ford is also working with leading manufacturers of trays and canopies as part of its approved-supplier program to offer a wider range of choices.

Ford is offering three accessory packs to suit different types of use: The Farm Pack includes a tray choice (galvanised, body colour or matte black), water tank,



**SAME STUFF**
Most the the regular Ranger accessoies should fit the SD

DUAL PURPOSE
Kit up for work and/or play

tool box, ARB bull bar and all-weather mats; the Work Pack gets you a tray with a choice of device mounts, all-weather mats, weathershields and wheel nut indicators; while the Adventure Pack gets you the tray choice, all-weather mats, Warn winch and rock sliders.

The Integrated Device Mounting System and Top Console Mount provide secure spots for phones, GPS units or dash cams, with charging ports and cable management built in.

The accessory line-up also includes some big-ticket items from trusted aftermarket manufacturers, including an ARB Summit bull bar and a Warn winch neatly mounted behind the number plate.

Inside, Ford's ongoing partnership with ARB ensures that the accessory manufacturer will be at the leading edge of products for Super Duty with most of the gear buyers will be looking for.

Talking to suppliers at the Melbourne 4x4 Show back in August, it seems that all the major service body manufacturers are in on the approved supplier ticket so there should be no end to the choices of canopies and trays for the Ranger SD. With its promised 4500kg towing and GCM capacities, it's a vehicle that certainly has tongues wagging.

# FORD EVEREST SPORT NOW IN BI-TURBO

Ford Australia is now offering the MY26 Everest Sport with the punchy four-cylinder bi-turbo diesel engine. Normally, the Sport has only been offered with the V6 diesel powertrain but this special edition offers all the extras of the Sport model with the 500Nm four-pot.

Some of the included features on the bi-turbo Sport are actually options on the V6 Sport. That means it gets the full-time 4x4 transfer case, Touring Pack, integrated trailer brake controller, Pro Trailer Backup Assist, tow bar with wiring, prestige paint, black exterior accents and 360° camera… all included as standard fitment.

Just 700 bi-turbo Everest Sports will be offered with a recommended driveaway price of $75,000.

The Everest Sport bi-turbo is expected to go on sale from October.

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3800KG

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# TRAVEL BULLETIN

## ALL THE LATEST 4X4 NEWS AND EVENTS

Now is the time to get out and about to enjoy this great land and support the communities. Experienced adventurer Ron Moon has listed a few upcoming highlights, as well as essential track info.
As always, check with event organisers before locking in your plans.

### HIGH COUNTRY TRACKS REOPEN (VIC)

The seasonal closure of tracks in the Victorian High Country is scheduled to wrap up in early November, with most reopening for the Melbourne Cup weekend (1-4 November).

As is often the case in the alpine regions of Australia, heavy snowfalls and ongoing wet weather could mean some tracks remain closed beyond this date, so make sure you check out the www.parks.vic.gov.au website for the latest updates before heading out.

### RODEO THRILLS (WA)

Head to the Brunswick Junction Recreation Grounds on Saturday, 22 November, for a full day of rodeo action, live music and family fun.

The event runs from 8am to 11pm, with two country bands playing after the rodeo wraps up.

Take a leisurely stroll through the variety of stalls with the kids, enjoy the licensed bar from 11am, and stay on-site with camping available for the weekend. Details at harveyregion.com.au/event/brunswick-junction-rodeo-2024.

### PIG RACES AT THE NINDIGULLY PUB (QLD)

Head to the tiny town of Nindigully on 28-29 November for the annual pig races at the famous Nindigully Pub.

The event raises funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service and always draws a big crowd. Updates can be found on the pub's official Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NindigullyPubOfficial.

### LAKE GOLDSMITH STEAM RALLY (VIC)

The 126th Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally runs 1-2 November, bringing together locals and visitors for a weekend of machinery in motion.

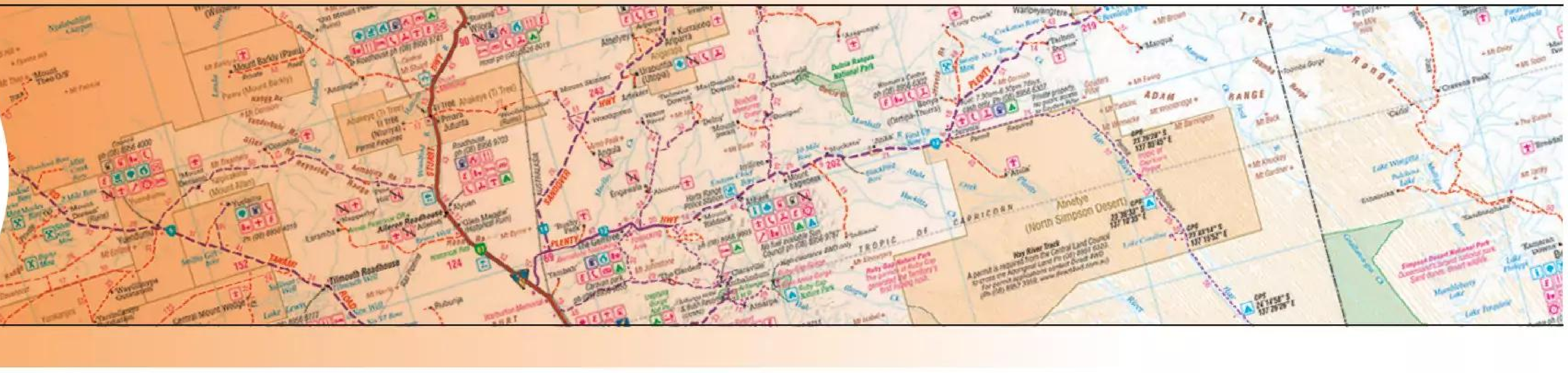
More than 65 display sheds will be open, showcasing steam and oil engines, sawmills, earthmoving gear, motorcycles, trucks, tractors and more.

With on-site catering and plenty to see, it's a great day out for the whole family.

### WEST COAST HERITAGE & MINERALS FAIR (TAS)

Zeehan hosts the annual West Coast Heritage & Minerals Fair on 8 November, one of the region's biggest social events.

Known locally as the 'Gem



Fair', the event began in 2004 and now attracts up to 80 traders and around 3000 visitors.

Held at the West Coast Heritage Centre, the day includes an open day at the museum, blacksmith demonstrations, kids' entertainment, live music and plenty of food stalls.

The gem and mineral traders set up in the historic Gaiety Theatre. More info at discovertasmania.com.au/things-to-do/arts-and-culture/2025-west-coast-heritage--minerals-fair.

Brisbane
Darwin
Sydney
Alice Springs
Canberra
Perth
Melbourne

## SEE THE GREAT LAKE (SA)

Northern South Australia is warming up, but with the crowds gone it's the perfect time to visit Lake Eyre.

After months of inflows, the lake peaked in late September and still holds plenty of water. As a result, birdlife is thriving, with thousands of pelicans nesting, roosting and feeding across the area.

The best way to take it in is from the air, with scenic flights from William Creek available through Wrights Air. For details see www.wrightsair.com.au.

FIRST LOOK

# LANDCRUISER 300 PERFORMANCE HYBRID

## PETROL POWER IS MAKING A COMEBACK IN THE TOYOTA LANDCRUISER AND WITH 326KW AND 790NM THIS HYBRID 300 SERIES IS NO SLOUCH!

Toyota Australia (TMCA) has given us a first look at the Performance Hybrid version of the popular LandCruiser 300 Series variants, which are set to go on sale in early 2026, with exact timing still to be confirmed.

The Performance Hybrid powertrain marks the return of petrol power to the LC range, but it will only be offered in the high-spec GR Sport and Sahara ZX models, both limited to two-row seating for five passengers. TMCA has confirmed there will be a price premium for the petrol-hybrid LandCruiser but hasn't revealed how much, saying only that more details will come closer to the 2026 launch. For reference, the Sahara ZX and GR Sport currently list for $146,910 and $146,160 (+ORC) respectively – so the hybrid versions won't be cheap.

Toyota didn't have to look far for a hybrid powertrain to slot into the 300, adapting it from the Tundra full-size pick-up, where it's the only engine offered. Both the Tundra and LC300

LANDCRUISER 300

share the TNGA-F chassis platform, so the adaptation process should have been relatively straightforward.

The hybrid powertrain is led by a 3.5-litre twin-turbo V6 petrol engine producing a claimed 326kW and 790Nm, paired with an electric motor mounted between the ICE and a conventional 10-speed automatic transmission. Drive is fed through the LandCruiser's standard full-time dual-range transfer case, rather than the part-time system used in the Tundra.

The Hybrid variants retain all of the LandCruiser's off-road attributes which, in the case of the GR Sport, means front and rear locking diffs, KDSS, MTS and Crawl Control.

Externally and internally, the hybrids are almost identical to their diesel-powered counterparts, the only difference being a slightly raised cargo-floor height to accommodate the battery mounted underneath.

Toyota calls this system its Performance Hybrid, distinguishing it from the Efficiency Hybrids found in most of its passenger-car range. The Performance Hybrid combines petrol and electric powerplants via a clutch that manages switching between power sources depending on load and driver input, with the petrol engine always operating at speeds above 30km/h. Below that, the system can run on electric power alone.

Official fuel-consumption figures for the Performance Hybrid 300 are yet to be released.

The GR Sport LC300 shown here was a pre-production version of the Performance Hybrid and, at the time, the only one in the country. Even so, Toyota was willing to let us take it for a drive on its short but comprehensive vehicle evaluation and training track at Altona.

With its tuning focused more on performance than outright efficiency, the system delivers strong acceleration, responsive power and ample torque for towing. To demonstrate this, we used a short straight section of road for a 0-100km/h blast in the 300.

Flooring the accelerator from a standstill delivered a hefty shove in the back – something you won't experience in any other production 300 Series. The acceleration is forceful and rapid, with the needle sweeping past 100km/h in no time

**FLOORING THE ACCELERATOR DELIVERED A HEFTY SHOVE IN THE BACK – SOMETHING YOU WON'T EXPERIENCE IN ANY OTHER PRODUCTION 300 SERIES**

20
40
60
80
100
120
140
160
180
200
220
240
260
km/h
612 km
E
F

before we had to brake hard for a 90-degree corner. Toyota isn't exaggerating when it calls this a Performance Hybrid, though it has yet to reveal any official 0-100km/h times.

The test track also features an off-road playground with offset moguls, humps, climbs and a water crossing, and since this was a GR Sport, it would have been remiss of us not to have a go.

The steep climb is cut with offset ruts designed to test a vehicle's traction and highlight the suspension and electronic aids at work. We tackled it in low range with only the centre diff locked, leaving the GR Sport's front and rear lockers disengaged. The hybrid retains all of the LC300's rear-axle articulation to keep the tyres on the ground, while the sharp ETC system quickly quelled any slip and drove the Cruiser up and over.

It was a similar story over the offset moguls and a harsh bed of rocks, with the hybrid performing like any other LC300 – only without the clatter of a diesel engine.

For giggles, we tackled the same obstacles using Crawl Control, and the system handled them just as easily without any throttle input from the driver. We then ran up the steep climb in reverse, again with Crawl Control engaged, proving this clever technology is just as effective in either direction.

Naysayers like to claim that EV-equipped vehicles can't cross water, so we drove the LandCruiser through a pond with a water depth of 600mm. Needless to say, it went through repeatedly without issue. Toyota is adamant that the hybrid powertrain does not diminish the LandCruiser's capability in any way.

While this is the first Australian application of Toyota's Performance Hybrid, the company is quick to remind us it has long been a hybrid pioneer, with five generations of technology since the first Prius launched 28 years ago. In that time, TMCA has sold more than 500,000 hybrid vehicles locally, and today nine models in its line-up are exclusively hybrid-powered. Hybrids now make up almost half of Toyota's total sales in Australia.

TOYOTA
Hybrid
System

TOYOTA
GR

MG
MGU9

WORDS **DEAN MELLOR** PHOTOS **SUPPLIED**

## MG STEPS UP:

# ALL-NEW MGU9 UTE

**MG HAS JOINED AUSTRALIA'S TOUGHEST SEGMENT WITH THE ALL-NEW MGU9 UTE – A BOLD DUAL-CAB THAT IS CLAIMED TO BLEND SUV-LIKE COMFORT WITH INNOVATIVE FEATURES. WE SAMPLE IT ON A SHORT OFF-ROAD DRIVE.**

MG has launched its first-ever 4x4 ute in Australia, the MGU9, a model the brand hopes will transform its reputation from small-car specialist to major player in the hard-fought ute market.

Priced from $52,990 drive-away, the MGU9 range tops out at $60,990 drive-away for the flagship Explore Pro. MG is pitching the newcomer as combining SUV-like comfort with rugged utility, aimed squarely at Australia's most competitive segment.

CEO Peter Ciao described it as MG's "big step up" – a model designed to push the brand into the Top 5 sales charts by 2030.

The MGU9 might look familiar to those who have seen photos of the upcoming LDV Terron 9. Both vehicles share the same platform, but MG has worked to set its ute apart with some meaningful changes. The rear suspension swaps the Terron 9's leaf springs for a multi-link coil setup, aimed at delivering a smoother, more composed ride when unladen. MG has also added clever touches like the Turnover End Gate with its integrated step and load stopper, along with the optional Electrically Foldable Rear Cabin Access Panel on the top-spec model.

Together, these features give the MGU9 its own identity within SAIC's growing ute family.

Front and rear locking diffs will help the MG off road

THE REAR SUSPENSION SWAPS THE TERRON 9'S LEAF SPRINGS FOR A MULTI-LINK COIL SETUP, AIMED AT DELIVERING A SMOOTHER, MORE COMPOSED RIDE WHEN UNLADEN.

## DRIVELINE

All MGU9 variants are powered by a 2.5-litre turbo-diesel four-cylinder engine producing a claimed 160kW and 520Nm, mated to a ZF-sourced eight-speed automatic transmission. The BorgWarner 4x4 system offers 2H, Auto, 4H and 4L modes, with front and rear electronically locking differentials standard across the MGU9 range.

A choice of Normal, Eco and Sport drive modes is joined by multiple off-road settings (Mud, Snow, Sand, Tow) plus a dedicated low-range terrain set (Rock, Deep Snow, Deep Mud, Wade and Rock Crawl). Low range runs a 2.64:1 ratio, resulting an on overall low-range reduction in first gear of 54.12:1, and giving the ute decent crawling ability.

Suspension is double wishbone front and multi-link independent rear – unusual in this class – and benchmarked on Australian roads, although MG admits it wasn't specifically tuned for local conditions. Payload capacity is a modest 770kg to 870kg depending on model grade, which is down significantly on the live-axle leaf-sprung Terron 9's 1005kg-1100kg. Having said that, maximum braked towing cpacity is the class standard 3500kg, while ground clearance is 220mm and wading depth 550mm.

## MODEL GRADES

The MGU9 will be available in three grades:

Explore (from $52,990 drive-away): 18-inch alloys, LED headlights, 12.3-inch infotainment and digital instrument cluster, cloth trim, artificial leather seats, basic safety and off-road modes.

Explore X (from $55,990 drive-away): 19-inch alloys, additional safety systems, Amazon Music/iSmart connectivity, 360-degree camera, leather upholstery, heated front seats, electric passenger seat, roof rails, tub slide rail and extra lighting.

Explore Pro (from $60,990 drive-away): 20-inch alloys, JBL audio, suede headliner, panoramic sunroof, leather seats with massage/ventilation, 64-colour ambient lighting, Smart Hatch (electrically foldable mid-gate), optional Electrically Foldable Rear Cabin Access Panel, and the standout Turnover End Gate with built-in step and cupholders.

## INSIDE STORY

Overall comfort is excellent. There is power adjustment up front and heated, cooled and massaging driver's seat in the Pro. The cabin is wide and spacious, with no transmission tunnel hump in the rear – rare in this class. Outer rear-seat passengers get plenty of rake and decent leg room, as well as seat heating in the top-spec model. The rear window is notably large, aiding rear-seat ambience, although the centre rear passenger sits a little upright.

Twin 12.3-inch displays dominate the dash, with most drive controls accessed via the screen, which can be a little fiddly and would take some time to become accustomed to. While the HVAC uses proper buttons, the symbols are hard to read. Storage is plentiful – big cupholders, wide door bins, a deep console box (complete with seatbelt cutter and glass breaker), and even an aircraft-style gear selector. There are physical buttons to select the drive mode, engage low range and lock the diffs, but you still need to look at the screen to check the vehicle settings.

A camera rear-view mirror ensures vision even with passengers or cargo in the way.

The top-spec models MultiFold flat-folding system combined with the optional Smart Hatch mid-gate provides great versatility, either for carrying long loads or for accessing the tub from inside the cabin.

## EXTERIOR FEATURES

Styling is best described as bold, with a massive chrome grille, wide flanks and a high bonnet line. A 360-degree camera system aids visibility for off-road manoeuvres. Side steps are standard but sit low, and approach angle is limited by a chin spoiler and light splash guard, all of which we grounded a few times on test.

The Pro's Turnover End Gate is a standout feature, functioning as a load stopper, a rear step, or even a bench seat with cupholders. The Smart Hatch electrically folding rear panel is another innovation, expanding load flexibility beyond what most utes offer.

All of the utes we drove at the launch were top-spec and all featured spray-in bed liners, adjustable cargo tie-down points and cargo hooks, although the front hooks are too high to be of much use.

Transmission shifter was lifted from the Starship Enterprise

**RIDE COMFORT WAS IMPRESSIVE, THE MULTI-LINK REAR SOAKING UP BUMPS SURPRISINGLY WELL FOR AN UNLADEN UTE**

## FIRST DRIVE IMPRESSIONS

Our first taste of the MGU9 came on a short off-road course, with speeds rarely exceeding 30km/h. Even so, a few key takeaways emerged.

Ride comfort was impressive, the multi-link rear soaking up bumps surprisingly well for an unladen ute.

The engine felt incredibly refined and quiet for a diesel four, with barely audible clatter at idle. We'll reserve judgment on the rest of the NVH package until we've had the chance to sample the MGU9 on the road.

Steering felt light but accurate, with a surprisingly tight turning circle for such a large vehicle.

The ZF auto shifted smoothly at low speeds, though again we'll reserve judgment on highway behaviour until a longer test.

Towing performance seemed confident hauling a 2600kg caravan at low speed, the wide mirrors giving excellent rear vision.

Downsides? Approach and departure angles aren't great, the sidesteps hang low, and the splash guard is vulnerable. Larger tyres could help, but front suspension design limits upsize potential.

## WARRANTY, DEALERS AND THE BIGGER PICTURE

The MGU9 is backed by MG's seven-year warranty and will be supported by a network of more than 100 dealers across Australia.

Service intervals are 12 months/15,000km, and capped-price servicing will apply.

MG says the MGU9 marks a new era and is part of its push to become a Top 5 brand in Australia by 2030. With competitive pricing, innovative features and the promise of SUV-like ride comfort, there's no doubt the MGU9 will appeal to a section of the market looking for a refined and versatile dual-cab ute.

| MG MGU9 EXPLORE / EXPLORE X / EXPLORE PRO | |
|---|---|
| PRICE | $52,990 / $55,990 / $60,990 drive-away |
| ENGINE | Single turbo-diesel I4 |
| CAPACITY | 2499cc |
| MAX POWER | 160kW @ 4000rpm |
| MAX TORQUE | 520Nm @ 1500-2500rpm |
| TRANSMISSION | ZF 8-speed automatic |
| 4X4 SYSTEM | BorgWarner full-time 4x4 with 2H, Auto, 4H & 4L |
| CONSTRUCTION | 4-door ute and tub on ladder chassis |
| FRONT SUSPENSION | IFS double wishbone with coils |
| REAR SUSPENSION | Independent multi-link with coils |
| TYRES | 18-20 inch alloys |
| KERB WEIGHT | 2430-2485kg (varies by grade) |
| GVM | 3130kg |
| GCM | 6630kg |
| TOWING CAPACITY | 3500kg |
| PAYLOAD | 870kg / 835kg / 770kg |
| SEATS | 5 |
| FUEL TANK | 80L |
| ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION | 9.2L/100km (claimed) |
| ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION | N/A |

### MG MGU9

| | |
|---|---|
| **A** DEPARTURE ANGLE | 23° |
| **B** RAMPOVER ANGLE | N/A |
| **C** APPROACH ANGLE | 26° |
| **D** WADING DEPTH | 550mm |
| **E** GROUND CLEARANCE | 220mm |

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ISUZU
MU-X

**PHOTOS** COBEY BARTELS **PHOTOS** IUA

# NEW OILER

## ISUZU HAS JUST DROPPED A 2.2-LITRE ENGINE INTO THE D-MAX AND MU-X TO MEET NEW EMISSIONS REGS. WE DRIVE IT TO SEE IF IT'S ANY GOOD…

Isuzu Ute Australia (IUA) recently rolled out a new 2.2-litre engine and eight-speed automatic gearbox, to be offered alongside its proven 3.0-litre '4J' in D-Max and MU-X models, and we got to drive it.

The long and short of it is that the new Euro 5 RZ4F engine replaces the underwhelming 1.9-litre unit it's based on, with the redesigned powerplant producing a claimed 120kW/400Nm (up 10kW/50Nm), and it's backed by a new Aisin-sourced eight-speed auto. It also gets fuel-saving technology like Idle Stop Start (ISS) – but the 3.0-litre now gets that, too.

In listening to its customers, IUA has given the 2.2 models a full 3500kg braked towing capacity, compared to the 3000kg rating that hamstrung the 1.9 models, making the new powertrain as capable as its big brother on paper.

Customers will pay for the new engine and 'box though, with the 2.2-litre models priced around $1500 higher than their 1.9-equipped counterparts, and the price hikes extend to the 3.0-litre models adding between $1500 and $2500 to sticker prices across the range.

The cheapest 4x4 D-Max is now the SX 3.0 single-cab chassis at $46,200 (up $1500), and the cheapest dual-cab is the SX 2.2 at $50,700, while the entry-level 4x4 MU-X LS-M 2.2 starts at $55,900 (up $1500). The budget manual 'box models are also gone for good, with IUA offering only self-shifters from here on in.

This is the price we're all paying for the New Vehicle Efficiency Standards (NVES), as manufacturers fight to avoid hefty fines by bringing CO2 emissions down. The new engine spits out 174g of CO2 per kilometre in the D-Max and 177g/km in the MU-X, so it comes in below the 2025 threshold of 210g/km for light-commercial vehicles.

But, next year that threshold drops to 180g/km and by 2027 it will drop again to 150g/km, meaning at best this

The 2.2 models get the full 3500kg towing capacity

2.2-litre engine buys IUA a year or two, before it'll be faced with hefty fines for every vehicle sold.

As other brands like Toyota and Ford pursue hybrid technology in a bid to clean up their diesel models, Isuzu appears to have abandoned its mild-hybrid system, which featured – in very limited numbers – on its now-scrapped 1.9-litre engine in Thailand.

We weren't able to get anyone 'in the know' at IUA to confirm or deny the likelihood of a new mild-hybrid system for the 2.2-litre engine, and none would outline whether hybrid technology is planned for the brand's Australian models in the future.

Nor would executives elaborate on the previously announced electric D-Max model, suggesting that for the foreseeable future none of their models will feature electrified systems of any type.

Then there's the fact the new 2.2-litre engine is only Euro 5, despite IUA's truck-making sister brand Isuzu Trucks offering Euro 6 engines across its entire range of light- and medium lineup (and soon heavy-duty models too).

Isuzu Trucks has even managed to get its 4JZ1 – the commercial vehicle version of the 3.0-litre owners have come to love – to be Euro 6 compliant, albeit at the expense of requiring AdBlue.

"In terms of the Euro 6 engines there (at Isuzu Trucks), it's a different ADR category," explained IUA Senior Product Manager, Aaron Carty, when asked about the Euro 6 4J engine.

"So for us, we're striking the balance between what the consumer wants and likes, versus compliance and regulation. So when the time comes that we have to be Euro 6, we'll be Euro 6, but right now it's more cost-effective to provide a vehicle that's compliant to the current regulations."

When asked if the 3.0-litre models will receive the eight-speed automatic, senior executives at IUA ruled it out, calling into question the engine's future here. Even with the new stop-start system, IUA confirmed that the 3.0-litre engine emits 187g/km of CO2, and the MU-X is worse at 200g/km, meaning next year's 180g/km threshold will likely hurt the 4J.

Confusion about IUA's future models aside, they gave us the keys to a handful of 2.2-equipped D-Max and MU-X variants and told us to drive from the Royal Pines Resort on the Gold Coast, out to Swan Gully 4WD Park for some testing – a proposition we were quite okay with.

AS AN OWNER OF A 3.0-LITRE D-MAX, I WENT INTO THIS TEST WITH LOW EXPECTATIONS… BUT THE 2.2-LITRE IS A VERY DIFFERENT BEAST, QUIET AND REFINED

The 2.2 engine is now backed by an Aisin 8-speed auto

## HOW DOES IT DRIVE?

As an owner of a 3.0-litre D-Max, I went into this test with low expectations, especially after rather disliking the 1.9-litre engine on the handful of occasions I drove it – from its strained power to the clattery racket it made.

But the 2.2-litre is a very different beast, quiet and refined, and the eight-speed behind it is a serious step-up from the six-speed that's starting to feel a little bit dated and isn't without its quirks – like the inconsistent converter lockup and gear selection.

This new eight-speed 'box is decisive in its gear choices, quick to change and feels like it has a tighter lockup when on and off the throttle.

The six-speed works with the 4J, using the engine's torque ride the ratios, but it would without a doubt have let the smaller engine down, as it did for the 1.9-litre.

"I think the 1.9-litre engine might have highlighted some of the six-speed's weaknesses, and vice versa, even though that gearbox works so well with the 3.0-litre," Aaron told us, when discussing the move to an eight-speed transmission.

The new gearbox goes a long way in compensating for the 50 missing Newton metres, and during part-throttle, around-town use the lack of grunt is barely perceptible, even for someone who's in a 3.0-litre almost everyday.

Where the six-speed will hold a gear, relying on the 4J's propensity to lug, the eight-speed drops a cog but to its credit does so quickly and without confusion. Owners who drive mostly around town are probably going to prefer the eight-speed, because it's smoother, quicker and more efficient.

Another benefit of the new 'box is that it offers six low-range gears compared to four in the six-speed transmission, which could be felt when crawling up and down some of the rocky sections around Swan Gully. The six-speed has a tall first gear that can run away a bit downhill, but this transmission feels pretty damn good everywhere.

Manually hold gears, or tow, and the downrated power becomes noticeable, as I soon discovered.

I was given the chance to tow a two-tonne Lifestyle Campers off-road camper behind a 2.2 D-Max for the final stretch of on-road driving, as well as during some light off-road work at Swan Gully, and that's

when this engine started to feel a little bit underwhelming.

Up hills or when accelerating from a stop, it was a foot-flat affair to keep the little engine singing. Ideally, we'd like to put three or more tonnes behind it, to see if it can handle it, but if you're pulling those kinds of weights you probably aren't interested in a downsized engine.

Once back in an unladen MU-X, it was time to tackle the gnarlier trails. I really couldn't feel much of a difference, compared to the 3.0-litre models, with the gearbox making good use of the engine's power. Then there's the excellent Rough Terrain Mode, which dials the braked traction control (or nerd lockers) to 11, making it almost boring to wheel one of these – it's that good.

IUA claims the new engine sips 6.6L/100km in the D-Max and 6.9L/100km in the MU-X, beating out even the 1.9-litre's drinking habits by 0.3-0.9L/100km. While the gearbox probably contributes, it's the use of an Idle Stop Start (ISS) system that really brings the consumption down.

Now, I'm not a fan of stop-start, both because it's hard on cold engines, batteries and starter motors, but also because it's annoying in traffic. In summer it's most annoying, because it shuts the A/C off.

Credit where it's due, though, the Isuzu system is smart. It won't shut down the engine if it's cold (or hot), if there's steering lock applied, if the air-con is turned right up, or if the battery temp is outside of its optimal range. As I discovered, the system also turns off when in low-range.

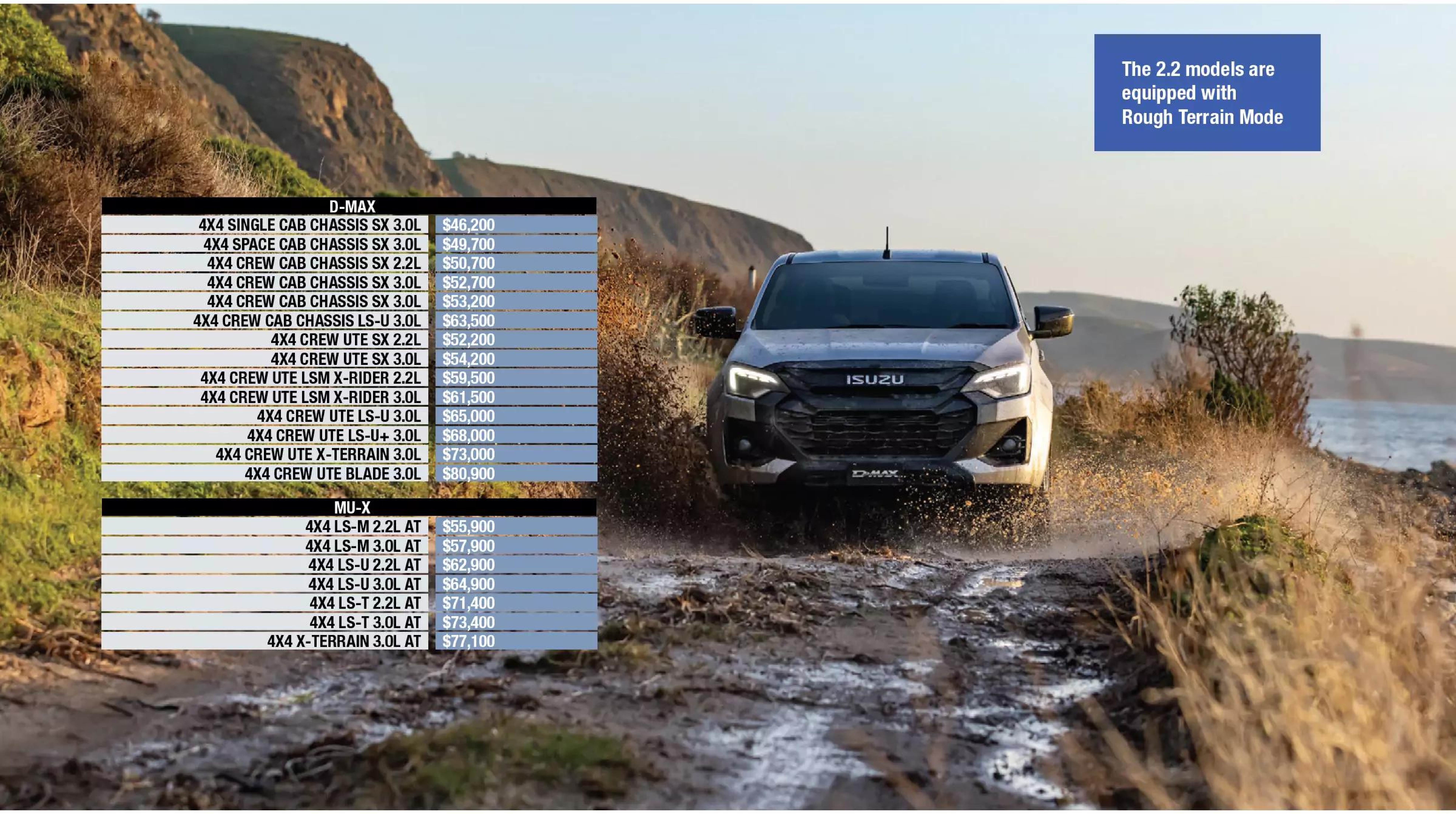
Isuzu has fitted a larger battery to compensate for the extra starts, and you can always turn it off with the press of a button. Once I'd tried the system out, that's exactly what I did.

As far as overall vehicle dynamics, the new models steer, stop and drive the same as their larger engined-siblings on- and off-road. It's only when you plant it that the slight lack of power becomes evident.

They also get all the same standard fare, like a part-time 4x4 system with locking rear diff, ADAS safety systems, modern infotainment with wireless phone mirroring, and from the outside they look identical. The new models also retain the five-star ANCAP rating.

To sum things up, I could live with the new powertrain in a daily driver, with the occasional off-road trip thrown in. But,until Isuzu achieves power ratings on par with other downsized diesels – such as Ford's 2.0-litre bi-turbo (157kW/500Nm) or Nissan's 2.3-litre turbo-diesel (140kW/450Nm) – this is an option best suited to city-dwellers.

We just hope the mighty 4J lives on into the future, perhaps utilising the Euro 6 smarts of the Isuzu Trucks equivalent, or a hybrid system to put it on par with Toyota and Ford. At this stage, though, it all feels a bit up in the air.



The 2.2 models are equipped with Rough Terrain Mode

| D-MAX | |
|---|---|
| 4X4 SINGLE CAB CHASSIS SX 3.0L | $46,200 |
| 4X4 SPACE CAB CHASSIS SX 3.0L | $49,700 |
| 4X4 CREW CAB CHASSIS SX 2.2L | $50,700 |
| 4X4 CREW CAB CHASSIS SX 3.0L | $52,700 |
| 4X4 CREW CAB CHASSIS SX 3.0L | $53,200 |
| 4X4 CREW CAB CHASSIS LS-U 3.0L | $63,500 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE SX 2.2L | $52,200 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE SX 3.0L | $54,200 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE LSM X-RIDER 2.2L | $59,500 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE LSM X-RIDER 3.0L | $61,500 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE LS-U 3.0L | $65,000 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE LS-U+ 3.0L | $68,000 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE X-TERRAIN 3.0L | $73,000 |
| 4X4 CREW UTE BLADE 3.0L | $80,900 |

| MU-X | |
|---|---|
| 4X4 LS-M 2.2L AT | $55,900 |
| 4X4 LS-M 3.0L AT | $57,900 |
| 4X4 LS-U 2.2L AT | $62,900 |
| 4X4 LS-U 3.0L AT | $64,900 |
| 4X4 LS-T 2.2L AT | $71,400 |
| 4X4 LS-T 3.0L AT | $73,400 |
| 4X4 X-TERRAIN 3.0L AT | $77,100 |

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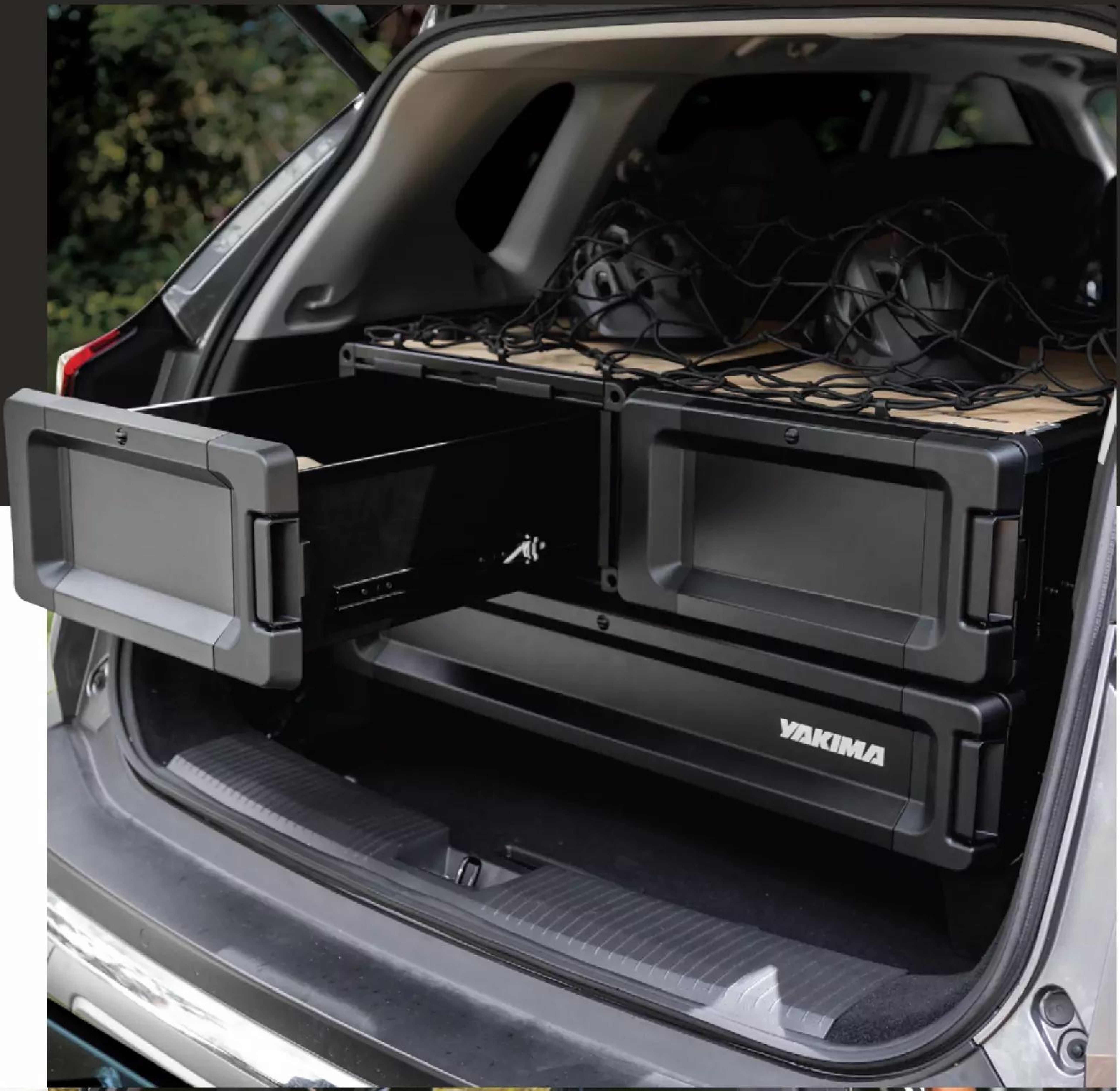

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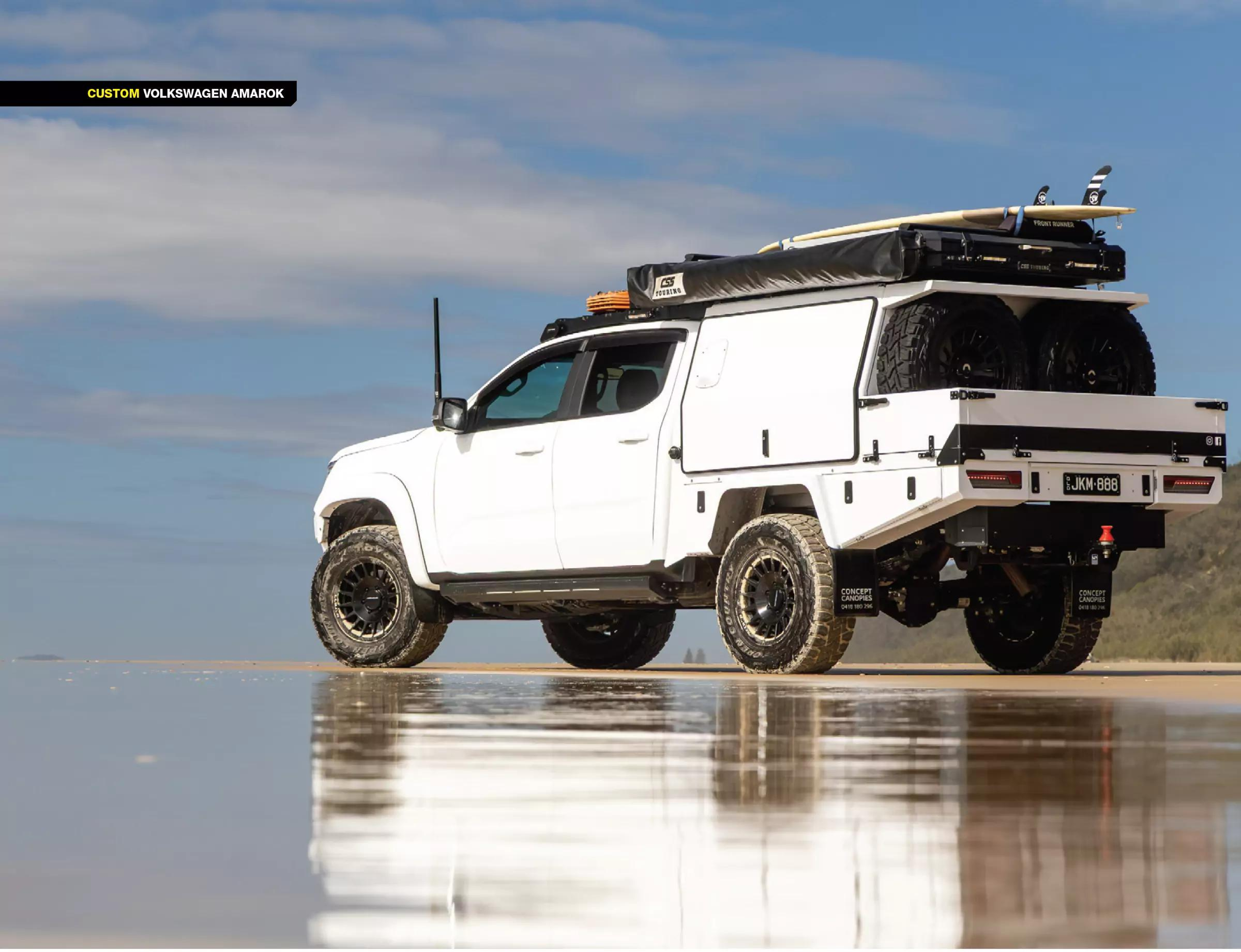
WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS MATT WILLIAMS

# LIGHTING *STRIKES* TWICE

**KEN IS A REPEAT OFFENDER WHEN IT COMES TO COOL KITTED AMAROKS AND THIS ONE IS HIS LATEST VW PROJECT**



Ken is proud of this VW build but says it's time to move on to the next one

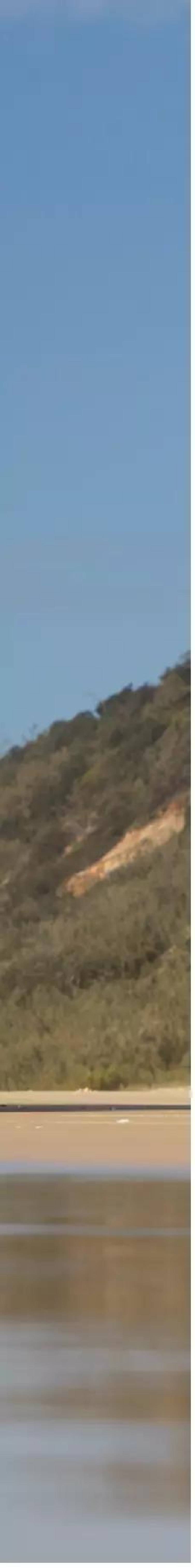
It feels like a lifetime since we featured Ken Miller's stretched white-lightning VW Amarok in *4X4 Australia*. It was a unique build for its time, as there weren't many modified Amaroks on the scene – and very few with serious chassis modifications like a longer wheelbase.

In the years since we showed you that 4x4, VW has gone a different way with its midsize ute. It no longer uses its own platform and powertrain, instead partnering with Ford to base the current Amarok on the Ranger – not a bad partner when you consider the Australian-developed Ranger is now the best-selling vehicle in the country and popular in every market where it's sold around the world.

The Amarok may have lost some of its Volkswagen DNA and performance in the transition, but it's now a well-proven 4x4 straight out of the box.

Ken has a thing for Amaroks, having owned six of them, and that enthusiasm hasn't slowed despite the change of base vehicle. When it came time to replace his old stretched build, he went for a V6 diesel-powered PanAmericana model.

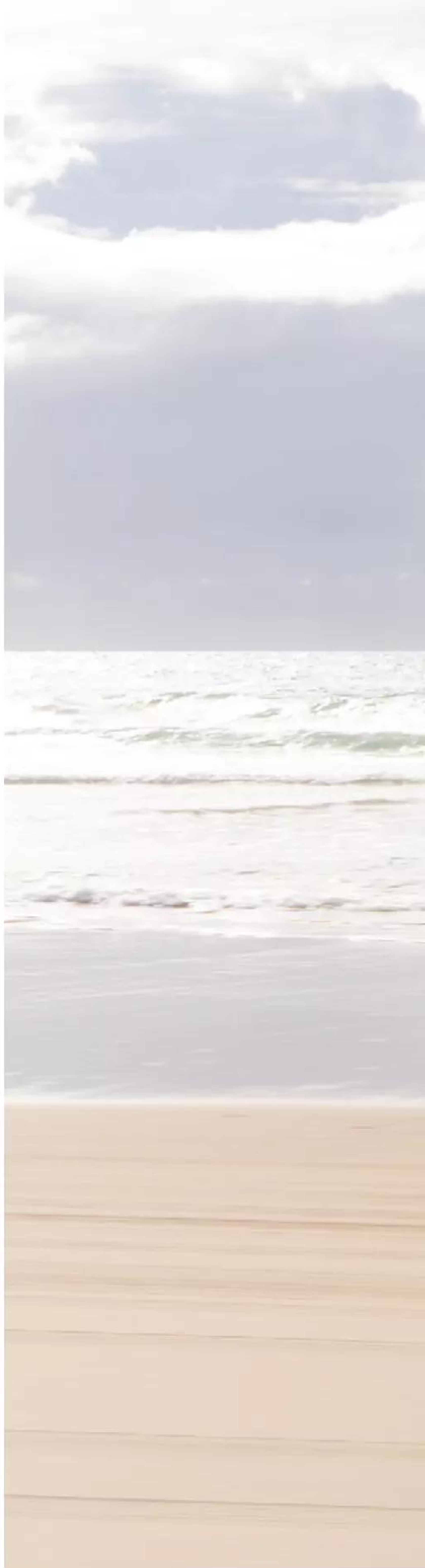
"I don't like being like everybody else," Ken told us when we asked why another Amarok and not a Ranger. "You really can't go past the tech and comfort of a European-based vehicle. The



ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE
EVC
E.4
MODE
SET
Uniden
03
XTRAK PRO
MENU
REPLAY
PRNDM
57642.3 km

PanAmericana Amarok has all the flash features in side

FRONT RUNNER
V6
JKM·888



IN THE YEARS SINCE WE SHOWED YOU THAT 4X4, VW HAS GONE A DIFFERENT WAY WITH ITS MIDSIZE UTE. IT NO LONGER USES ITS OWN PLATFORM AND POWERTRAIN, INSTEAD PARTNERING WITH FORD TO BASE THE CURRENT AMAROK ON THE RANGER

fuel economy and reliability are second to none, as are their capability and price."

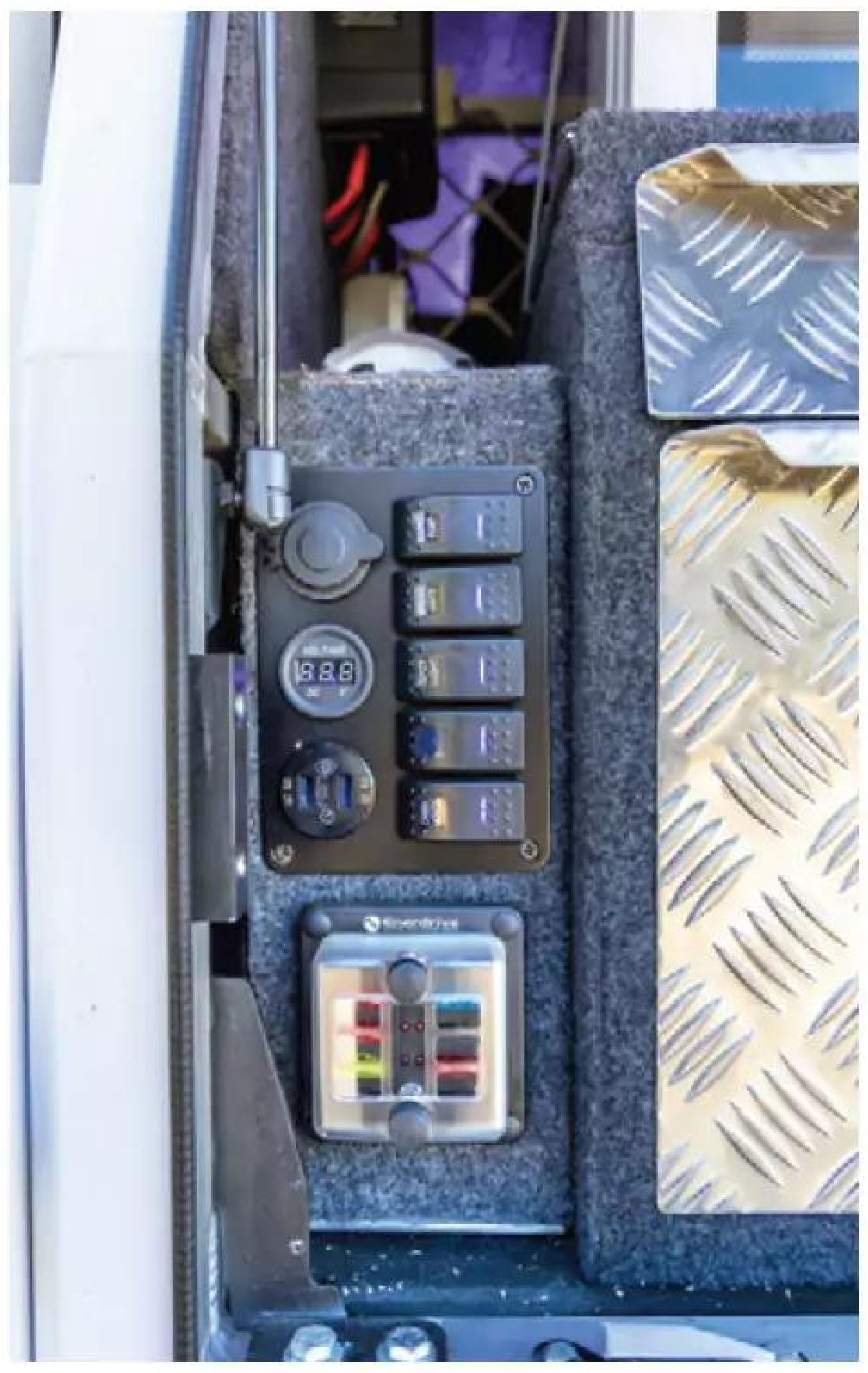
VW has put its own spin on the ute, giving the Amarok unique styling inside and out, bespoke multimedia tech, its own model range and distinct tuning compared with the Ford version. It's a package that still carries a hint of European style and flair. Ken has upped the ante with his own take on the VW, adding plenty of personal touches and modifications.

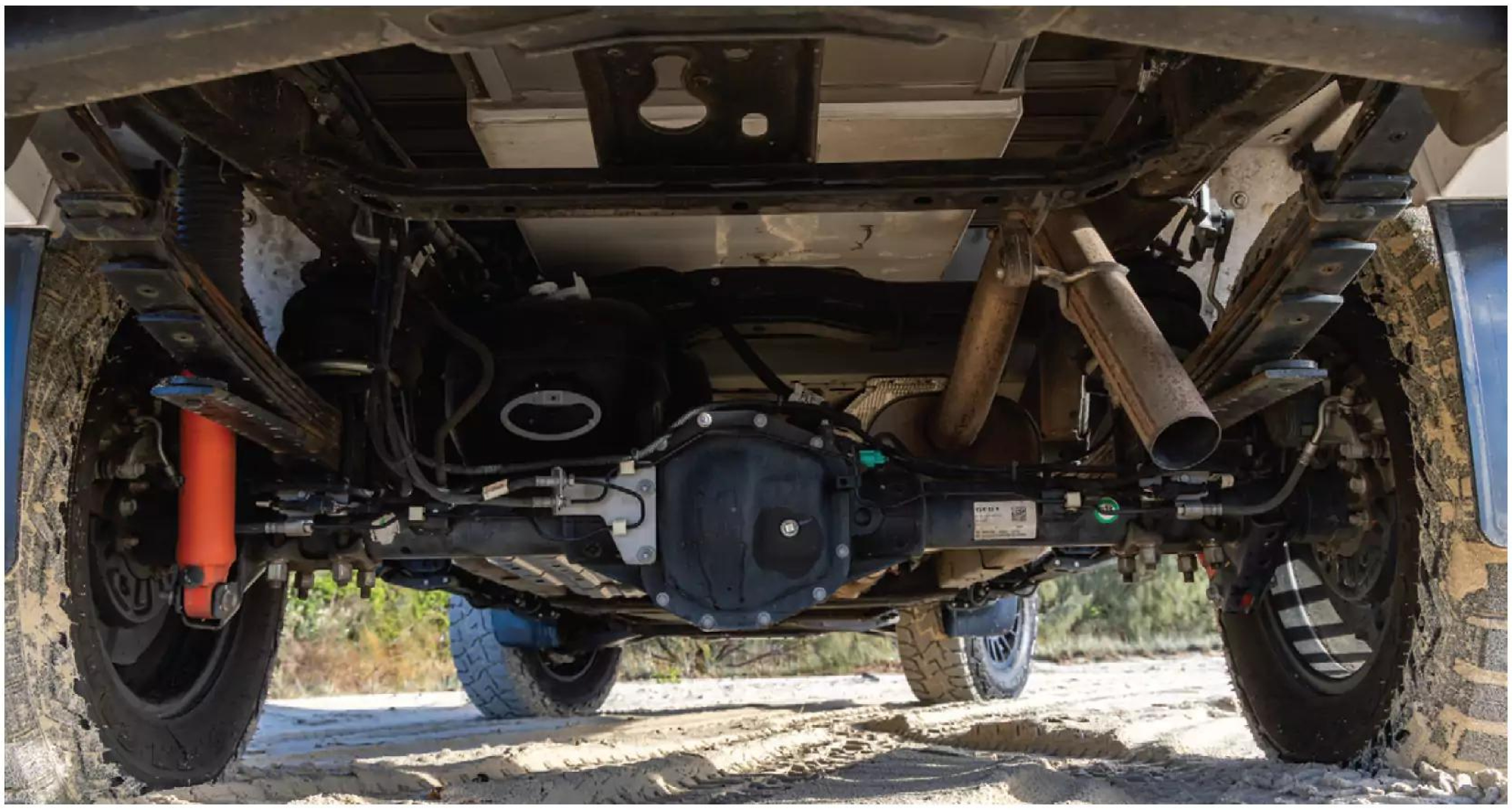
Step one was to lose the factory tub and get the vehicle over to Limitless Chassis on the Sunshine Coast, where it was cut and had an extra 300mm welded in between the front and rear axles. From his previous build, Ken knew the longer chassis would improve ride and handling while moving the rear axle back so it sat directly under the tray load.

Carrying the load is a replacement suspension kit from Outback Armour, providing an extra 50mm of ground clearance and adjustable ride control, while Airbag Man bags assist at the rear axle.

Concept Canopies built the custom tray and canopy for the project, which Ken then kitted out to his needs. The tray features underside toolboxes, an 80-litre water tank and a

An Enerdrive 12-volt set up keeps the lithium batteries charged

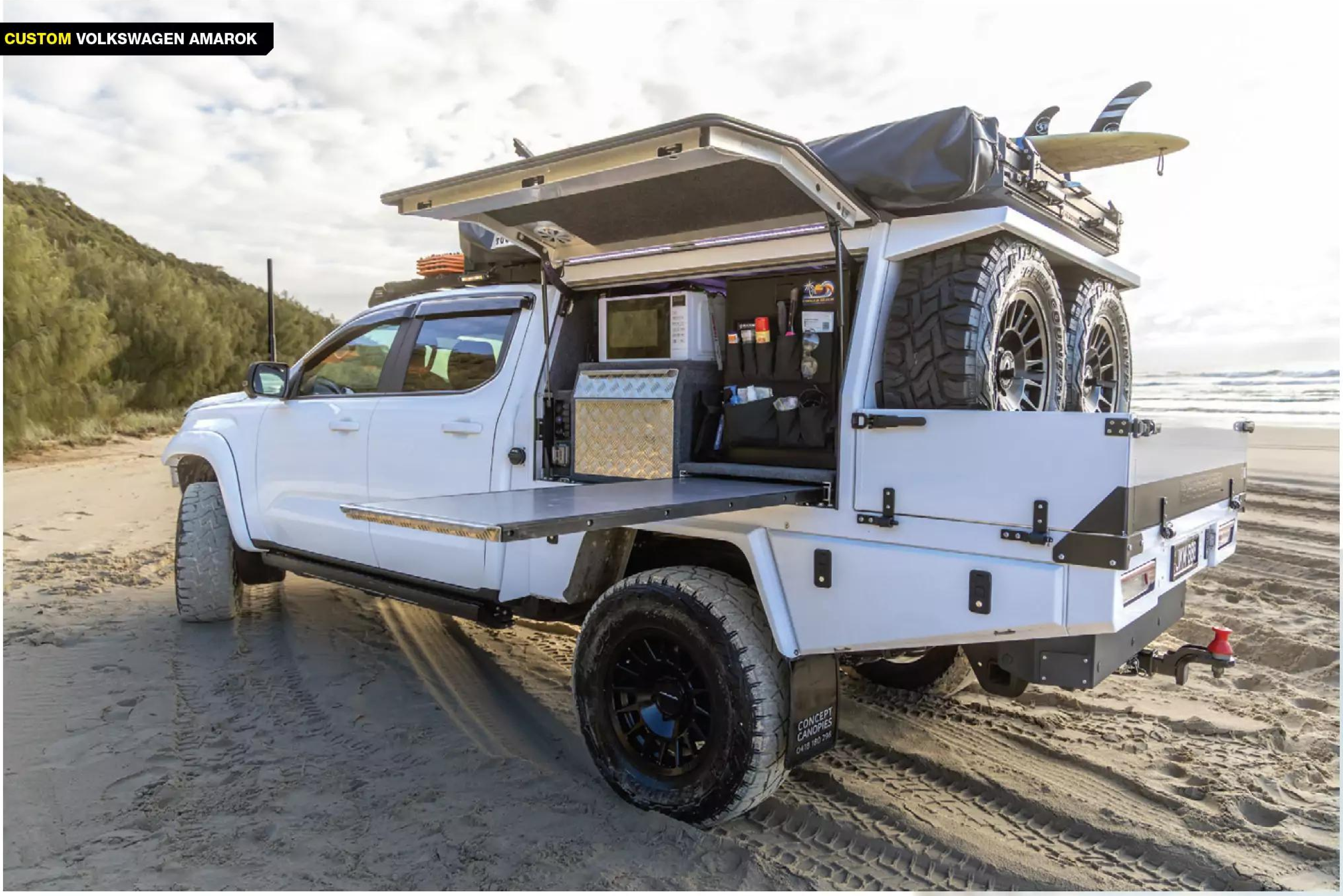




Outback Armour suspension and a water tank are hidden under the VW

CSS
TOURING

Aside the from dash, seat covers and a UHF radio, the well equipped interior remains stock



rear trundle drawer, while the custom-size canopy houses an 85-litre upright fridge, microwave oven, pantry and induction cooktop – all the gear Ken needs to be self-sufficient on his trips away from home.

Power for the canopy accessories comes from a pair of 100Ah lithium batteries, charged via an Enderdrive DC-DC system and feeding a 3000W inverter.

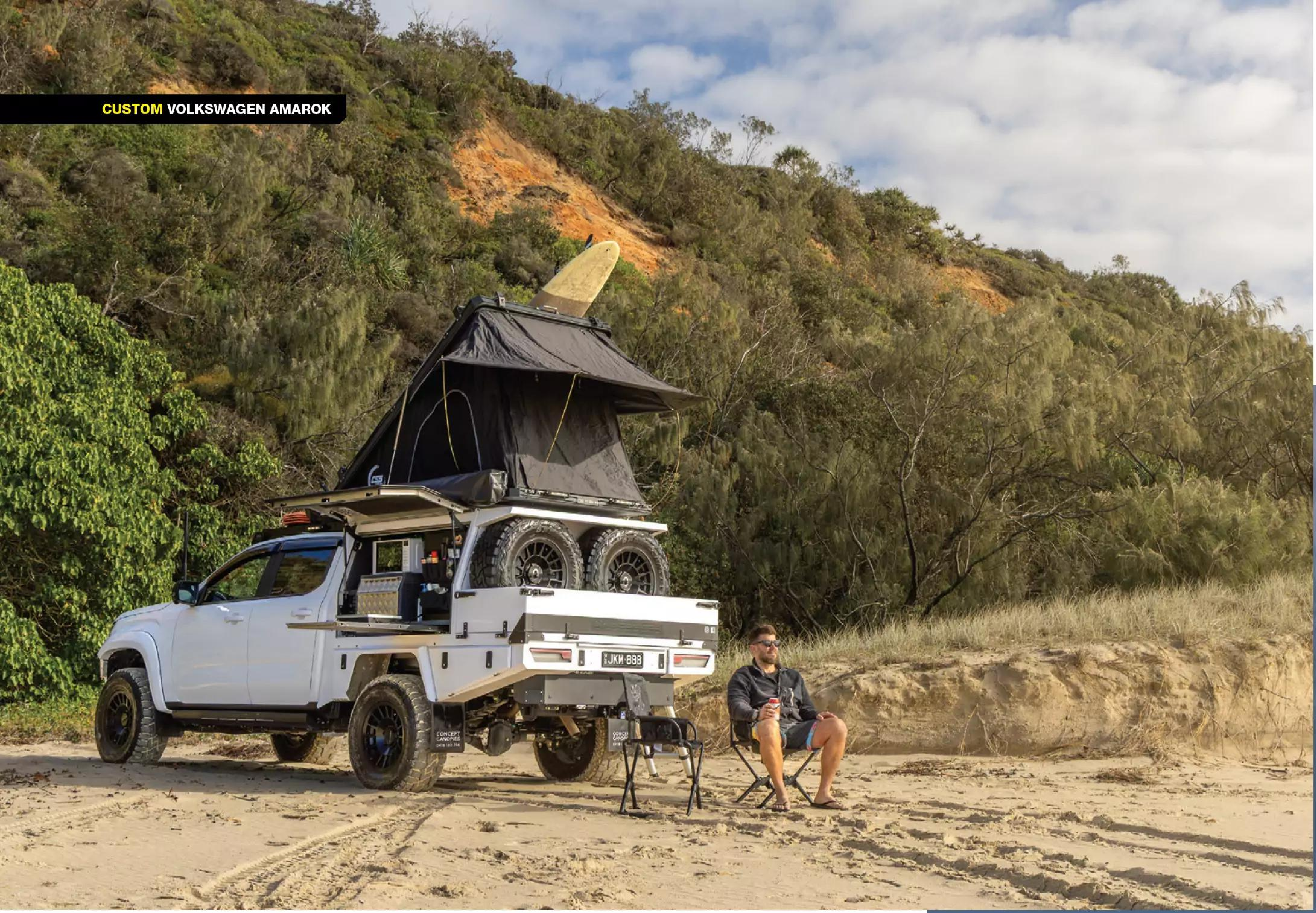
The Amarok's drivetrain remains standard, with Ford's 3.0-litre V6 diesel backed by a 10-speed automatic transmission and full-time dual-range 4x4. Ken has added an EVC throttle controller, allowing him to sharpen the response for performance or soften it for low-speed, rough-track driving.

Up front, the Amarok wears a Rhino bumper with underbody protection, housing a 12,000lb Carbon winch and an Ultravision 22-inch LED lightbar. Conventional rock sliders have been replaced with powered drop-down side steps from Off Road Industries.

Further auxiliary lighting includes a 40-inch Stedi lightbar

**Passenger-side of the canopy has the fridge and kitchen set-up**

IT’LL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHAT KEN COMES UP WITH TO TOP THIS TOURER



**WHILE IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE KEN HAS CREATED THE ULTIMATE AMAROK FOR HIS BUSH AND BEACH OFF-ROAD ADVENTURES, HE TELLS US THERE'S ALREADY A NEW PROJECT ON THE BOIL**

RTT for beachside camps and catching the early waves

mounted on the Front Runner roof rack, along with Stedi camp lights. The rack also carries Front Runner surfboard mounts – essential for Ken's Sunshine Coast lifestyle – plus shovel mounts and storage boxes, all from Front Runner.

The rooftop tent and 180° awning mounted on the rack are both from CSS.

The Maxtrax on the rack are another essential piece of kit for a 4x4 that spends plenty of time on the beach, while a Sherpa Big Air compressor handles re-inflating the 295/70 Toyos on Method Race Wheels.

While it might look like Ken has created the ultimate Amarok for his bush and beach off-road adventures, he tells us there's already a new project on the boil – and this VW Amarok is up for sale. It'll be interesting to see what he comes up with to top this tourer.

Method 707 wheels feature Bead Grip tech to help keep the tyres on the rims running at low pressures, making them ideal for beach work

KIA
CAP·75S
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# Beauty Ute Pageant

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS ELLEN DEWAR

**THEY WON'T WIN ANY BEAUTY PAGEANTS, BUT THE TASMAN SX AND TRITON GLX-R HAVE PLENTY TO OFFER 4X4 TOURERS. WE COMPARE THEM HEAD-TO-HEAD.**

Kia's new Tasman ute hasn't exactly set the sales charts alight in its first two months on the market, with just over 700 units registered in both July and August this year. Still, it's early days for the model.

If Tasman sales are slower than expected, it's likely because many buyers can't get past the controversial front-end styling, but let's face it – neither of the utes in this test is going to win a beauty contest.

Most of our seat time in the Tasman so far has been in the upper-spec X-Pro and X-Line variants, so we figured it was time to sample a lower grade. Here we have the Kia Tasman SX, the second rung up from the base model, priced at $54,490 (+ORC).

For comparison, we've lined up the Tasman SX with the Mitsubishi Triton GLX-R which, at $56,740 (+ORC), is close on both price and specification. The current Triton is also one of the newer contenders in the midsize 4x4 ute market.

The back-end is the probably best angle from which to view these two utes

# Kia Tasman SX

For a lower-grade, mid-spec model, the Tasman SX feels impressively well equipped and feature-laden – certainly more so than the pricier Triton GLX-R.

**WHAT YOU GET:**

- 17-inch alloy wheels
- Full-size spare wheel
- Front and rear parking sensors
- Rear-view camera (pick-up only)
- Cruise control
- Drive modes: Snow, Sand, Mud
- Push-button start
- LED headlights and daytime running lights
- Trailer sway control
- Trailer set-up menus
- Integrated trailer brake controller
- Tailgate with lift assistance
- 12.3-inch driver cluster and multimedia screens
- Wireless Android Auto/Apple CarPlay
- Six-speaker sound system
- Inbuilt sat-nav
- LED interior lights
- Cloth-trim seats
- Dual-zone climate control
- Tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS)

The big screens and wide cabin give the Tasman a more premium feel than the Triton, and a more modern one too – which, of course, it is. The rear seat in the Tasman SX misses out on the slide-and-recline function found in the X-Line and X-Pro models, but it does feature a large under-seat storage bin.

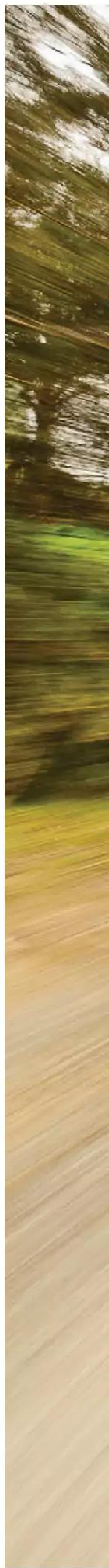
One key difference between the SX and the higher grades is the use of a T-bar transmission shifter in the centre console, rather than the stalk-mounted selector and paddle shifters. The SX also misses out on a wireless phone-charging pad.

The Tasman S, SX and SX+ models carry a 5-star ANCAP rating that the higher grades miss out on. This is thanks to the 'cow-catcher' front spoiler, which is claimed to improve pedestrian safety in the event of a strike. The trade-off is a reduced approach angle that limits off-road performance. On our drive we scraped the front lip often, though without causing damage.

Like all Tasmans, the SX is powered by a 2.2-litre single-turbo diesel engine producing a modest 155kW and 441Nm. It's paired with an eight-speed automatic transmission and a part-time dual-range 4x4 system, which also offers a 4x4 Auto mode for on-road all-wheel-drive grip.

The Tasman SX features an auto-locking rear differential and an open front diff, though the ETC still works across the front axle. This differs from the X-Pro, which has a driver-selectable rear diff lock, allowing you to engage it before getting into trouble. On test, the SX spun its wheels on steep ruts, but once the rear diff locked up the vehicle forged ahead without issue.

The Tasman comes with Kia's seven-year warranty, capped-price servicing and up to eight years of roadside assistance.



CAP·75S
MITSUBISHI

> **THE BIG SCREENS AND WIDE CABIN GIVE THE TASMAN A MORE PREMIUM FEEL THAN THE TRITON**

CRUGEN
KUMHO

# Mitsubishi Triton GLX-R

The current Mitsubishi Triton is less than two years old, making it one of the newer utes in its class and an ideal match-up for the new Tasman. Yet from the moment you sit inside the GLX-R, it feels older and more like a working ute than the more passenger-friendly Tasman. That's not necessarily a bad thing for the Mitsi – it's just not as plush.

**WHAT YOU GET:**

- 9-inch multimedia screen
- 7-inch driver information panel in the dash binnacle
- Wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and inbuilt sat-nav
- Around-view monitor
- Auto door locks, key-in-ignition start/stop
- Comfort-spec rear leaf springs
- Part-time dual-range 4WD with full time 4x4 as well

Tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS)

- Cloth seats
- Single-zone climate control
- Rear-seat ventilation and controls
- 17-inch alloy wheels
- Halogen headlights, DRLs and parkers

All Triton 4x4s are powered by a 2.4-litre bi-turbo diesel engine producing 150kW and 470Nm, and it's the extra torque output that gives the Mitsubishi the edge over the Tasman when push comes to shove. The Triton gets along nicely, with swift acceleration and strong pulling power when you need it.

The Triton's six-speed auto might feel dated in today's market, but in reality there's nothing wrong with it – it does the job well.

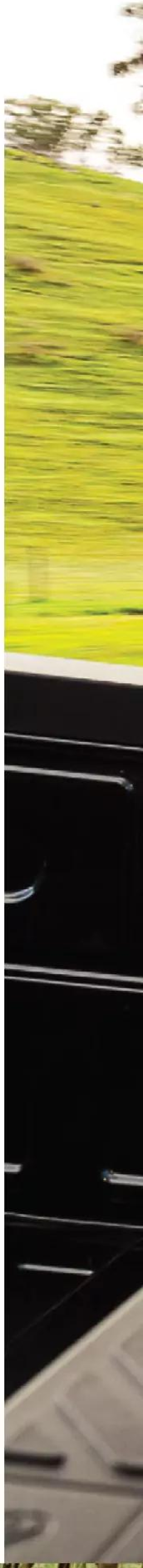
The Super-Select 2 transfer case give you high and low range 3x3 as well as full and part -time AWD options.

The Triton was the first 4x4 ute to achieve a five-star ANCAP safety rating under the latest 2024 standards, and it comes loaded with tech such as AEB, ABS, ESC, ETC, lane-departure warning and intervention, TPMS, nine airbags, plus front and rear cross-traffic alert. Both utes feature a driver-monitoring system, but I found the Mitsubishi's more intrusive than Kia's, whose subtle chime is easier to ignore.

The Mitsubishi's interior keeps its working-class look and feel, with smaller screens, more hard plastics and, in the case of the GLX-R, a key start and manual handbrake – not that there's anything wrong with that.

Like the Tasman, the Triton offers a spacious cabin with plenty of room in both the front and rear seats. The roof-mounted rear vents are a great feature we'd like to see in more vehicles.

The Triton comes with Mitsubishi's Diamond Advantage: a 10-year warranty, capped-price servicing and roadside assistance (conditions apply).



MITSUBISHI

THE EXTRA TORQUE OUTPUT GIVES THE MITSUBISHI THE EDGE OVER THE TASMAN WHEN PUSH COMES TO SHOVE

The Triton's bi-turbo engine hauls the ute along well and will leave the Tasman behind in a drag race

Both the Tasman and the Triton are comfortable tourers and are decent off-road performers

# Summary

On- and off-road, both of these utes deliver exactly what they promise. They're competent 4x4s, comfortable tourers and safe family haulers.

The current Triton may be one of the newer 4x4 utes on the market, but the Tasman makes it feel older than it is. The Kia sets new benchmarks for interior comfort, equipment and refinement – standards we've only otherwise seen in the BYD Shark.

It would be a close race between the two, with the Mitsubishi likely edging out the Kia to 100km/h – though the difference is negligible. For me, the Tasman's added safety and drivability from its 4x4 Auto system, combined with the excellent suspension tuning, seals the deal when it comes to both sealed and unsealed-road performance.

If you were towing a two-tonne-plus trailer, you might appreciate the extra grunt of the Mitsubishi's powertrain.

The Tasman SX feels like it should cost considerably more than the Triton GLX-R, yet it's actually the cheaper option – and that, along with everything else we've covered, makes it the clear winner of this test. Just be sure to remove that chin spoiler before you tear it off on the first erosion mound you drive over.

| | MITSUBISHI TRITON GLX-R | KIA TASMAN SX |
|---|---|---|
| PRICE | $56,740+ORC | $54,490+ORC |
| ENGINE | Twin turbo-diesel I4 | Single turbo-diesel I4 |
| CAPACITY | 2442cc | 2151cc |
| MAX POWER | 150kW @ 3500rpm | 154kW @ 3800rpm |
| MAX TORQUE | 470Nm @ 1500-2750rpm | 440Nm @ 1750-2750rpm |
| TRANSMISSION | 6-speed automatic | 8-speed automatic |
| 4X4 SYSTEM | Part-time, dual range 4x4 | Part time/dual range 4x4 with on demand mode |
| CONSTRUCTION | 4-door ute and tub on ladder chassis | 4-door ute and tub on ladder chassis |
| FRONT SUSPENSION | IFS with wishbones and coils | IFS double wishbone with coils |
| REAR SUSPENSION | Live axle on leaf springs | Live axle on leaf springs |
| TYRES | 265/65R17 on alloy wheels | 265/70R17 on alloy wheels |
| KERB WEIGHT | 2105kg | 2237kg |
| GVM | 3200kg | 3250kg |
| GCM | 6250kg | 6200kg |
| TOWING CAPACITY | 3500kg | 3500kg |
| PAYLOAD | 1095kg | 1013kg |
| SEATS | 5 | 5 |
| FUEL TANK | 75L (17L adblue) | 80L |
| ADR FUEL CONSUMPTION | 7.5L/100km | 8.1L/100km |
| ON TEST FUEL CONSUMPTION | 10.2L/100km | 10.4L/100km |

### KIA TASMAN SX

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **A** | DEPARTURE ANGLE | 26.2° |
| **B** | RAMPOVER ANGLE | 25.8° |
| **C** | APPROACH ANGLE | 32.2° |
| **D** | WADING DEPTH | 800mm |
| **E** | GROUND CLEARANCE | 252mm |

### MITSUBISHI TRITON GLX-R

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **A** | DEPARTURE ANGLE | 22.8° |
| **B** | RAMPOVER ANGLE | 23.4° |
| **C** | APPROACH ANGLE | 30.4° |
| **D** | WADING DEPTH | N/A |
| **E** | GROUND CLEARANCE | 228mm |

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WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS CRISTIAN BRUNELLI

# SNOW BUSINESS

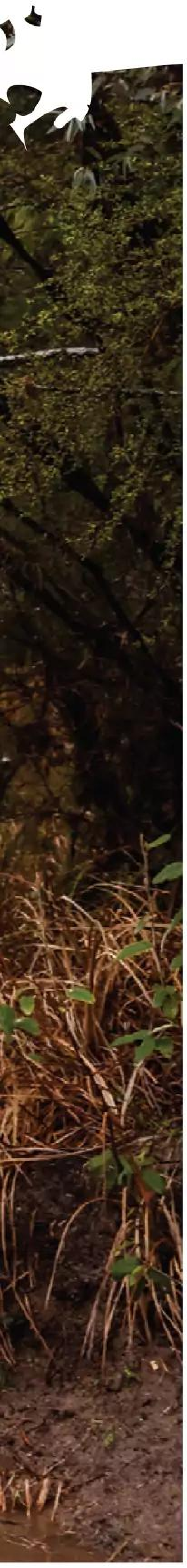
*An alpine convoy over Mt Skene, a brewery stop in Mansfield and plenty of snow driving brought our supporters and mates together for a memorable weekend*

The best thing about the project vehicles we have at *4X4 Australia* is working with the amazing aftermarket businesses that contribute and supply the gear to make them special.

In 2025 we've built up a couple of special 4x4s – the BYD Shark and the LandCruiser 79 Series – fitting them with top-notch gear to create better off-road touring vehicles.

We had a specific target for these builds, with both set to tackle a Simpson Desert drive, and we wanted to make sure they were up to the task. The PHEV Shark in particular was a bit of an unknown quantity, so we ensured we had the back-up needed to get it across the desert – hopefully under its own steam, but with help on hand if required.

Thanks to our amazing suppliers and drivers, both vehicles crossed the Simpson relatively unscathed, and the corresponding videos on our YouTube channel are well worth a watch.



With many of these suppliers in town for the Melbourne 4x4 Show – and conditions in the mountains perfect for an alpine drive – we invited them to join us for a couple of days of off-road touring in the hills.

Not everyone could make it, but we welcomed crews from Ironman 4x4, Marks 4WD, Evakool, MSA 4x4, Terrain Tamer, Piranha Offroad and Slattery Auctions. Of course, not all of the suppliers involved in the vehicles could join the trip, but it was a great crew and a manageable number of rigs to convoy over the mountains.

We based ourselves at the foot of the mountains in Mansfield, specifically at the Buller Road Brewery, where Adam from the brewery offered to lead our convoy over Mt Skene in the hope of scoring some snow-driving experience. The group was a mixed bag of vehicles with varying capability, so that had to be taken into consideration – not all of them were up to following Adam's portal-equipped LandCruiser wherever it could go.

The Jamieson-Licola Road takes you up over Mt Skene, and it's one of the few places in the High Country where you can find a good snow drive, with most other high-altitude tracks closed for winter. The road over Mt Skene is also closed, but you can drive it with a permit from 4WD Victoria, and with permits for each of

*Any day wheeling in the mountains beats a day in the office*

our vehicles we headed up the hill.

It's a long climb up the road from the hamlet of Jamieson, and in a few places we had to negotiate around fallen trees or break out the chainsaw to clear the way. Soon enough we were seeing patches of snow on the sides of the track, growing ever larger as we neared the summit.

Unlike the last time we attempted a convoy over Skene – when the snow was so deep it eventually turned us back – there was relatively little fresh snow on the summit this time. That made for a fun but straightforward drive to the top, where we were able to pull up and grab some pics in and around the patches of snow.

Of course, a cold front rolled through in the following days and dumped plenty more snow in the Alps, but any day wheeling in the mountains beats a day in the office. Soon enough we mounted up and continued on.

In some places, the drive down the mountain was more challenging than the climb up, with trickier terrain to contend with. More fallen trees across the track and wet, slippery descents tested the drivers' skills on the way down, while a couple of river crossings made for great photographic opportunities.

When we finally emerged on the Woods Point-Jamieson Road, it was still another hour or so back to Mansfield, where we congregated at the Buller Road Brewery for a great night of tasty food and an excellent selection of beers, all brewed on-site.

With Mansfield being the start or finish point for so many 4x4 adventures, the Buller Road Brewery is the perfect stop-off for a feed and a brew – you won't be disappointed.

While some of the crew had to leave

Buller Road Brewery (below) offers tasty food and beer brewed on site

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By the end, you always find yourself planning the next trip

**The meeting point in Mansfield is at the foot of the mountains**

the next morning, Ironman's Mark Berger led a convoy of the remaining rigs up to Mt Terrible. The run included more epic four-wheel driving, sensational scenery, a touch more snow and plenty of camaraderie.

It's this camaraderie that makes 4x4 trips so special – visiting amazing places, testing our skills and the ability of our vehicles, and spending time with mates. By the end, you always find yourself planning the next trip.

For us at *4X4 Australia*, trips such as this one are a way of thanking and spending time with those who support our vehicle builds and our publications, in a friendly atmosphere we all enjoy – and one that lets us talk shop without talking business.

We thank all of our supporters, especially those who took the time to join us on this fantastic adventure.

We're already planning the next one!

**Cold and wet but where would you rather be?**

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# KOOL RUNNINGS

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS PHOTOS CRISTIAN BRUNELLI

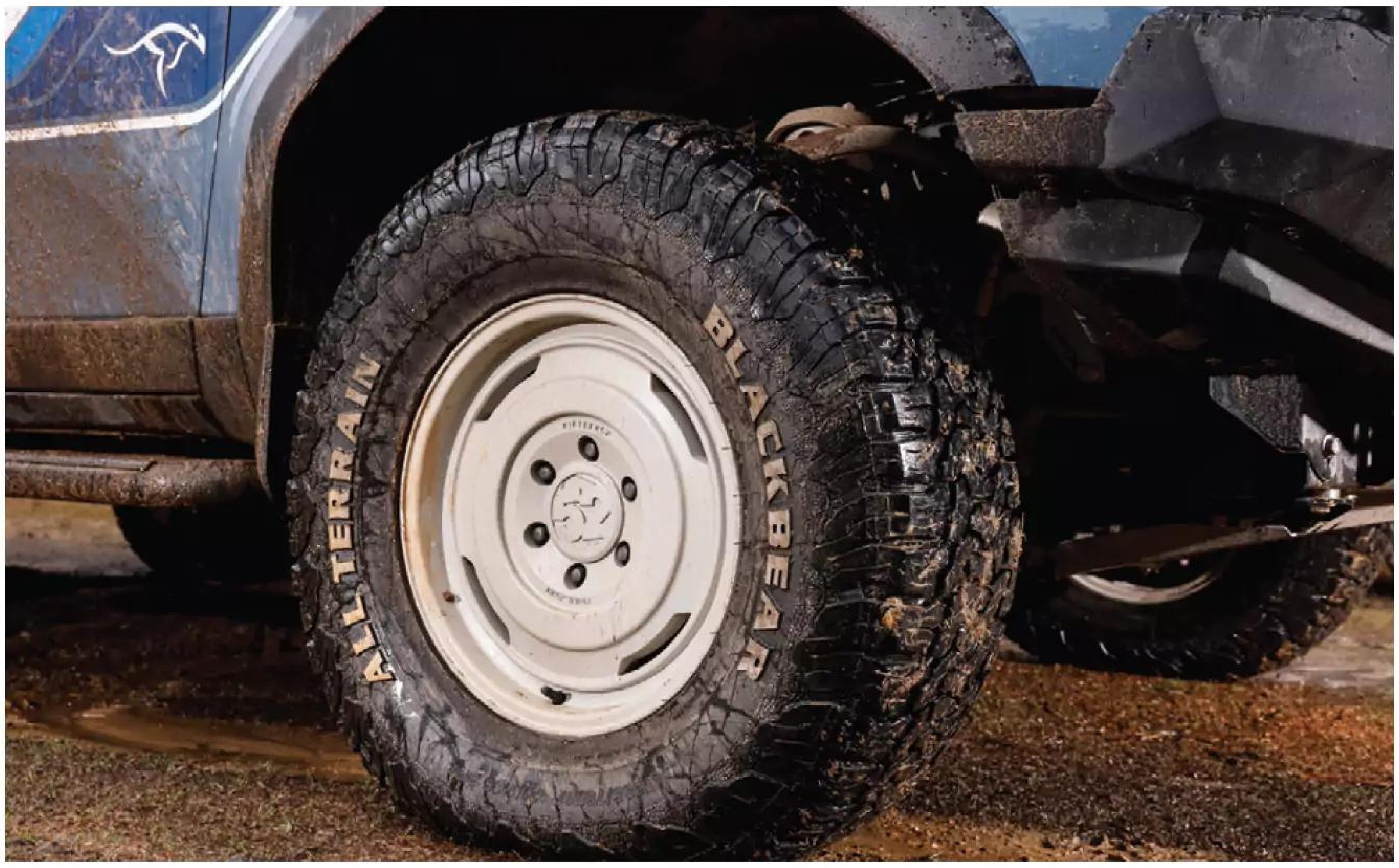
## A 250 SERIES PRADO BUILT TO SHOWCASE SOME OF THE BEST PRODUCTS AND CLEVER ENGINEERING IN THE 4X4 INDUSTRY BRINGS SOME MUCH NEEDED COOL TO THE FAMILY FAVOURITE WAGON

The Toyota Prado has always had a bit of a soccer-mum, school drop-off vibe about it. Practical, versatile and functional, yes – but you could never say a Prado was a cool car.

Enter the current 250 Series Prado and all of a sudden the temperature has seriously dropped – we're seeing some pretty cool-looking versions of Mum's taxi out on the tracks.

With the 250 Series landing in the USA a full year before we got it here in Australia, we were teased with what Americans were doing with them and the accessories they were fitting. Of course, it didn't take long before Australians started adding their own special touches.

Paul Toohey was never worried about any stigma attached to the Toyota Prado. After many years working in the local aftermarket 4x4 accessories industry with some of the biggest names in the business, he's owned three previous-generation Prados, along with a few LandCruisers, a Jeep and even a Jimny. So he was quick to jump into a 250 Series when they hit the market here.



**OLD SCHOOL**
Fifteen52 wheels give the appearance of steel rims in an alloy wheel

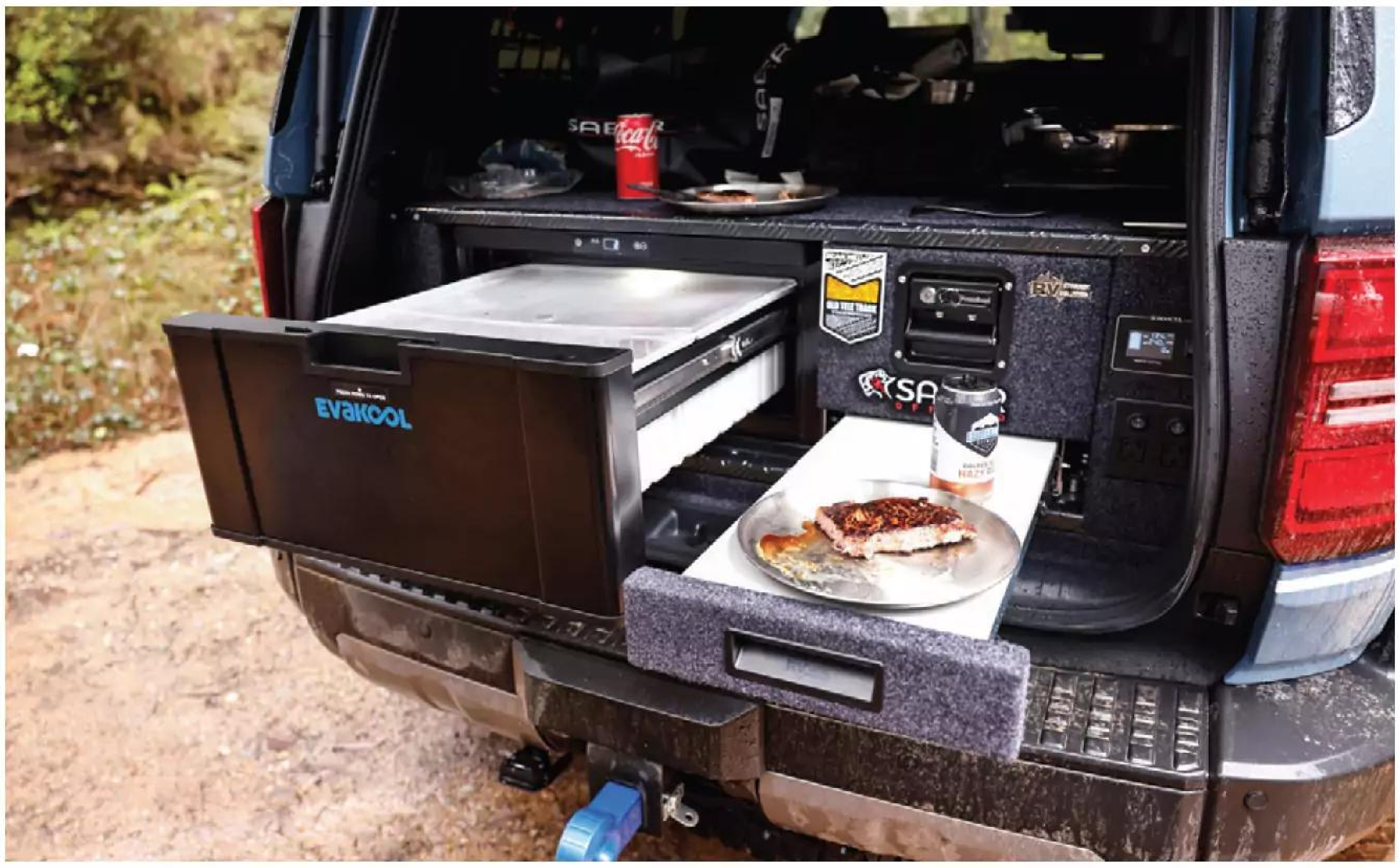
"The Prado is a vehicle that many people choose for its proven reliability, good resale value, comfortable size, reasonable towing capacity, touring capability and off-road ability," he says. "The 250 Prado balances Toyota reliability, practicality and genuine off-road capability."

To get the most from the Toyota's factory off-road ability, Paul chose the Altitude model with its rear diff-lock, disconnecting front swaybar and 18-inch wheels and tyres for his new work rig. As GM of EvaKool fridges, he definitely didn't want the seven-seat Prado, as plenty of his company's gear was slated for the cargo area – along with a heap of other top-notch modifications and accessories.

"We wanted to build a vehicle with a retro look to celebrate 31 years of EvaKool, and when we saw the shape of the 250 Prado, we knew it could look the part," Paul recalls. "We looked at the available models and knew the Altitude was the right one for us."

The choice of a Ningaloo Blue Prado with a white roof also suited Paul's plans for a retro look to celebrate the brand's history – but he had bigger plans to ramp that style up to the max. You can't miss the retro striping package down the Prado's flanks, with subtle branding included, but what really gives it that old-school look are the Fifteen52 'Analogue HD' alloy wheels that mimic classic steelies.

**KOOL GEAR**
The Prado is set up as a touring showcase of Evakool and other products



EVAKOOL
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GO FAST CAMPERS
CLEVERSHADE
EVK001

YOU CAN'T MISS THE RETRO STRIPING PACKAGE DOWN THE PRADO'S FLANKS – BUT WHAT REALLY GIVES IT THAT OLD-SCHOOL LOOK ARE THE FIFTEEN52 'ANALOGUE HD' ALLOY WHEELS

EVAKOOL
TOYOTA
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**FRESH AIR**
A Safari snorkel feeds the 2.8L engine which is yet to be tuned

**UP FRONT**
A TJM bullbar with Torq winch and Lightforce Beast lights dominate the front end

They're actually alloy, so relatively lightweight, but maintain the vintage vibe of old 4x4 steel rims. Paul had them powder-coated to match the Prado's roof colour before wrapping them in a set of 285 Blackbear All Terrains with raised white lettering – groovy, man!

Look behind the wheels and tyres and you'll find some of the finest Australian-made suspension money can buy. The JMACX Alpha adjustable suspension package is designed to deliver superior ride and control, with adjustability to suit load and driving style. On this build it's paired with Blackhawk upper control arms – the same parts used on the 300 Series LandCruiser.

Body protection starts with a full steel bull bar from TJM, which houses a Torq winch – also from TJM – and a pair of award-winning Beast driving lights from Lightforce.

Underbody protection comes from Kaon and includes front and rear shock protection – a valuable addition when you consider the price of those JMACX shocks!

The Prado's powertrain remains standard, with the 2.8 diesel and eight-speed auto transmission – however, Paul suggests a Just Autos tune could be on the cards at some stage.

Where the serious planning and work has gone into this Prado is inside, starting with the rear fit-out by RV Storage Solutions, which incorporates one of EvaKool's 40-litre drawer fridge/freezers. Paul is quick to point out that the unit offers a true 40-litre capacity and weighs close to half of what a

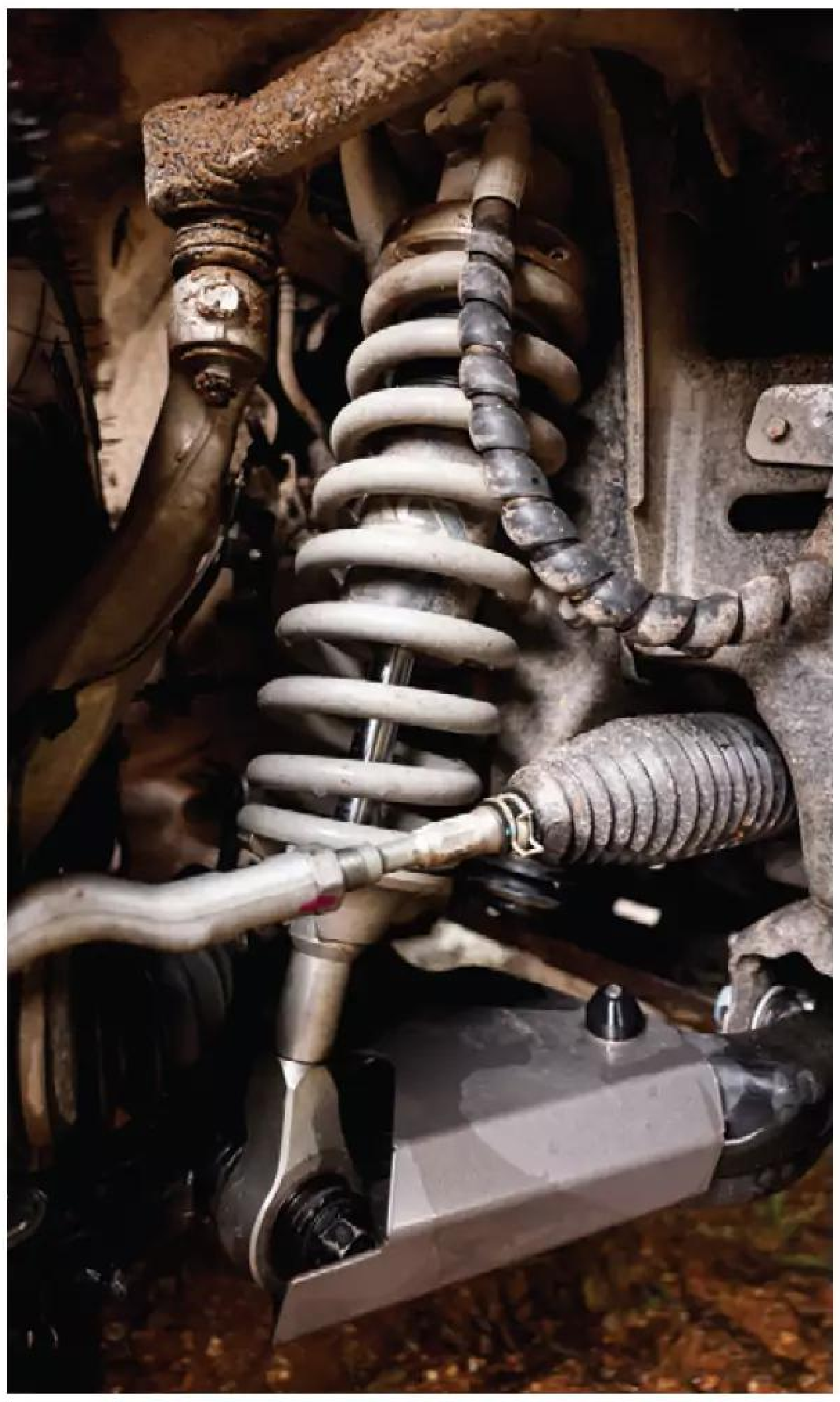
40-litre chest fridge with a slide would come in at. In fact, weight was an important consideration when building the Prado – especially when it came to what went up on the roof.

Rounding out the internal storage are a host of Kaon products, including the rear shelf, molle panels, tailgate console, storage bags and pouches. Hidden behind the left-side trim panel is a TJM Pro Series Twin Air Compressor and air tank, mounted on a JBA bracket, while the air hose is kept tidy on an Apex Designs reel.

Under the cargo floor, powering the fridge and other accessories, sits an Invicta 100Ah slimline lithium battery managed by a Redarc BCDC Alpha, all fitted by Accelerate Off Grid Auto Electrics. A 2000W inverter runs items

EVAKOOL
EVK001

**ALPHA ADJUSTABLE**
JMACX Alpha suspension is some of the best you can get for the 250 Series



**THE 250 PRADO BALANCES TOYOTA RELIABILITY, PRACTICALITY AND GENUINE OFF-ROAD CAPABILITY**

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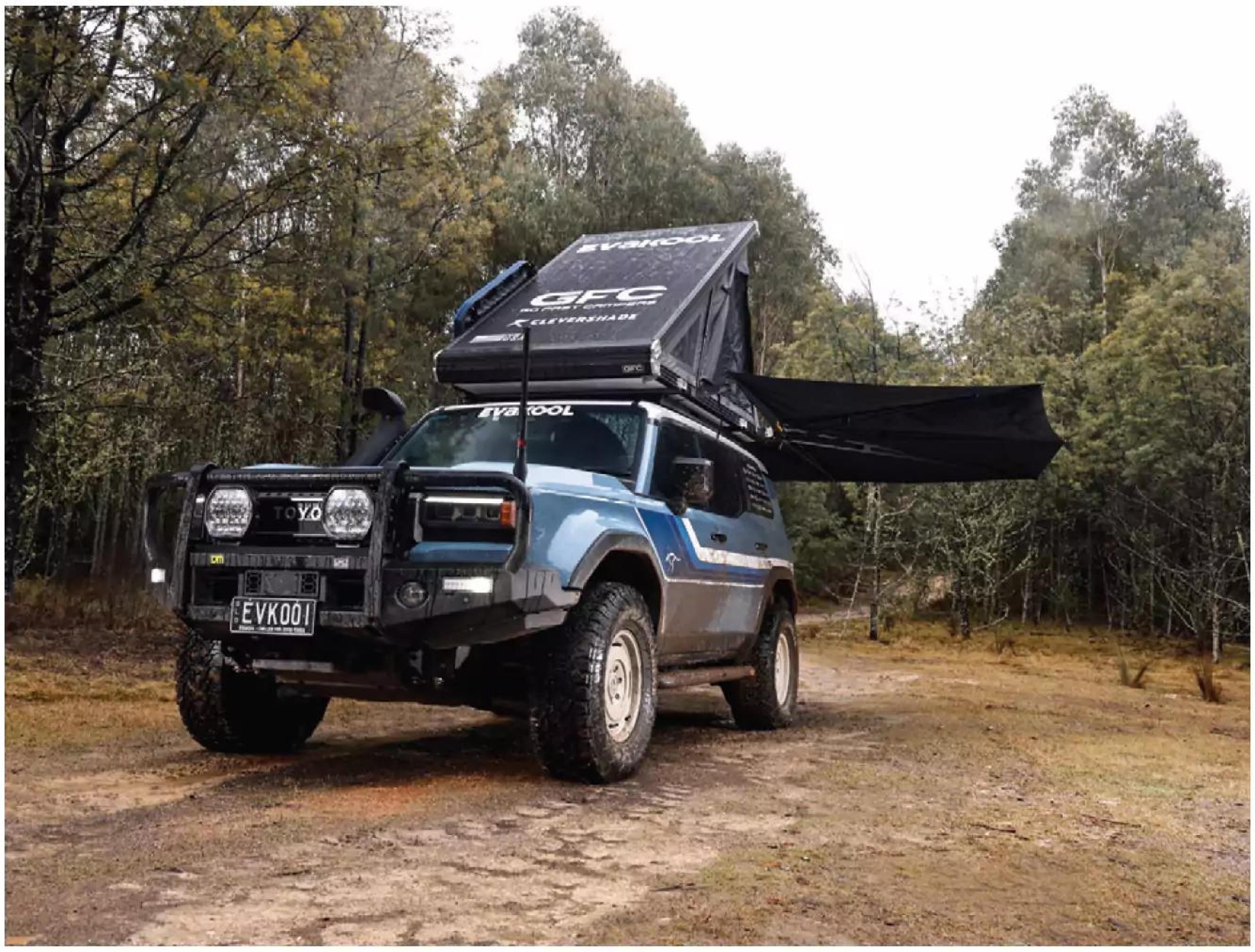
**HOME ON TOP**
The RTT and awning provide plenty of protection for inclement weather



like the induction cooktop and for charging Kincrome power tools.

Back on top of the Prado, you'll find a rooftop tent and awning – but not from the usual suspects in the local industry.

"For this build we were really trying to use the lightest products," Paul explains. "Pairing the US-made Go Fast Campers rooftop tent with the Australian-made Clevershade Ultralite awning gave us the perfect lightweight combo for the Prado's roof. At just 65kg for the tent and 16kg for the awning, we've kept the total weight well under what most people would have with just a rooftop tent installed."

The awning and RTT are mounted on a prototype stainless-steel and aluminium roof rack from TJM, which should be available in stores by the time you're reading this.

This impressive EvaKool Prado was finished to this stage in time for the Melbourne 4x4 Show in August and then joined us on our alpine drive – but like any build, it's not finished yet. Aside from the aforementioned tune, Paul says there's a Lightforce light bar to go up on the roof rack along with some camp lights, a sound bar in the cargo area that will constantly evolve as new products are tested, and the possibility of fitting bigger Black Bear mud-terrain tyres.

"Being in this industry allows us a selection of amazing products," Paul says of the Prado build.

"With this build we were able to put together a vehicle that consists of products that we have used for years in both industry vehicle builds as well as products that I run on my own personal vehicles. These are products that have been tried and tested."

Having a new 4x4 loaded with some of the best gear in the country as your company ride is pretty special – but it's something that comes with Paul's years of experience in the industry. You might say it's a pretty Kool company car.

**INSIDE ST0RY**
The interior remains almost stock with just a GME UHF radio added

**THE AWNING AND RTT ARE MOUNTED ON A STAINLESS-STEEL AND ALUMINIUM ROOF RACK FROM TJM, WHICH SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN STORES BY THE TIME YOU'RE READING THIS**

# Paradise Found

WORDS AND PHOTOS KEV SMITH

**Exploring K'gari – the world's largest sand island – proves every bit as rewarding as its reputation suggests**

I can't believe it's taken me more than 30 years to finally set foot on K'gari and experience its natural beauty, rich history and spectacular scenery. To be honest, I'd been avoiding the island, imagining huge crowds and endless sand recoveries – but I couldn't have been more wrong. Sure, tackling a new destination with a global reputation can be daunting, and my early research had me convinced the only way across was via Inskip Point, where the barge drops you on the island's southern tip. Like most of us, I'd heard the stories of crowds gathering to watch 4x4s bog down before reaching the barge – not exactly how I wanted to make my debut.

That's when I discovered another option – the River Heads barge, which runs across the Great Sandy Strait and lands directly at Kingfisher Bay Resort on K'gari's western side. The 40-minute crossing is an enjoyable cruise through crystal-clear waters teeming with marine life, from turtles and dugongs to dolphins and schools of fish. Normally I'd choose camping over resort living, but I booked a few nights at Kingfisher to explore the western side of the island before heading east for my planned camping dates.

After checking in, I pointed the rig south to Ungowa, a spot best known for the shipwrecks wedged into its mangroves. Ungowa offers bush camping as well as a handy day-use area near the old boat sheds.23 shipwrecks have been recorded around K'gari, and from

Driving the sandy tracks beneath towering trees that were spared when logging ceased is a mind-blowing experience

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FOUR WHEEL DRIVE

Plenty of day spots to relax in… or to camp overnight

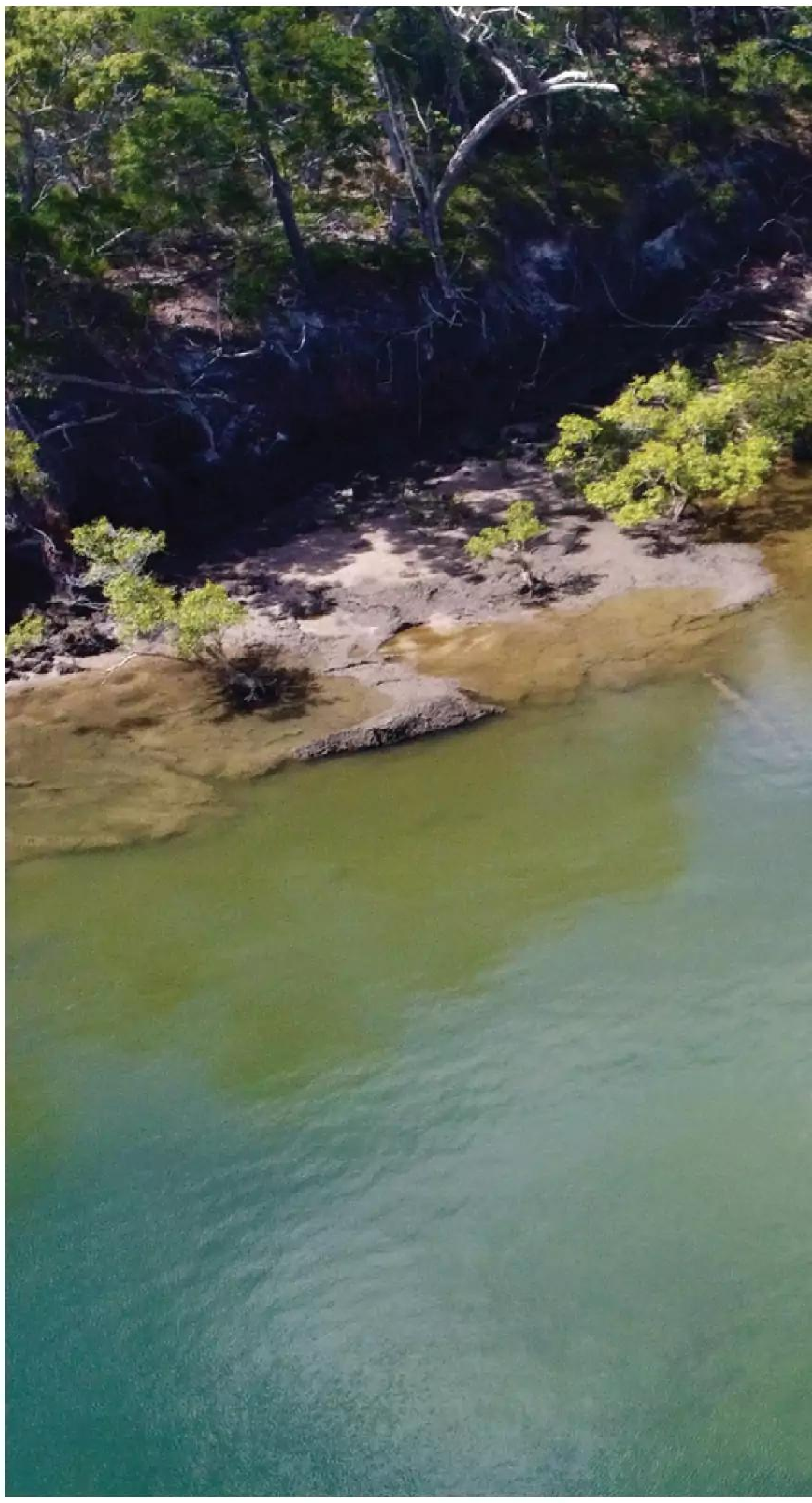
TALLOWWOOD TREES

the cliffs here you can spot two logging barges – theCeratodus and the SS Palmer, abandoned in 1942. The old jetty at Ungowa is barely standing these days, but once it was the hub for loading timber onto barges bound for the mainland. On their return run, those same barges carried gravel back to the island.

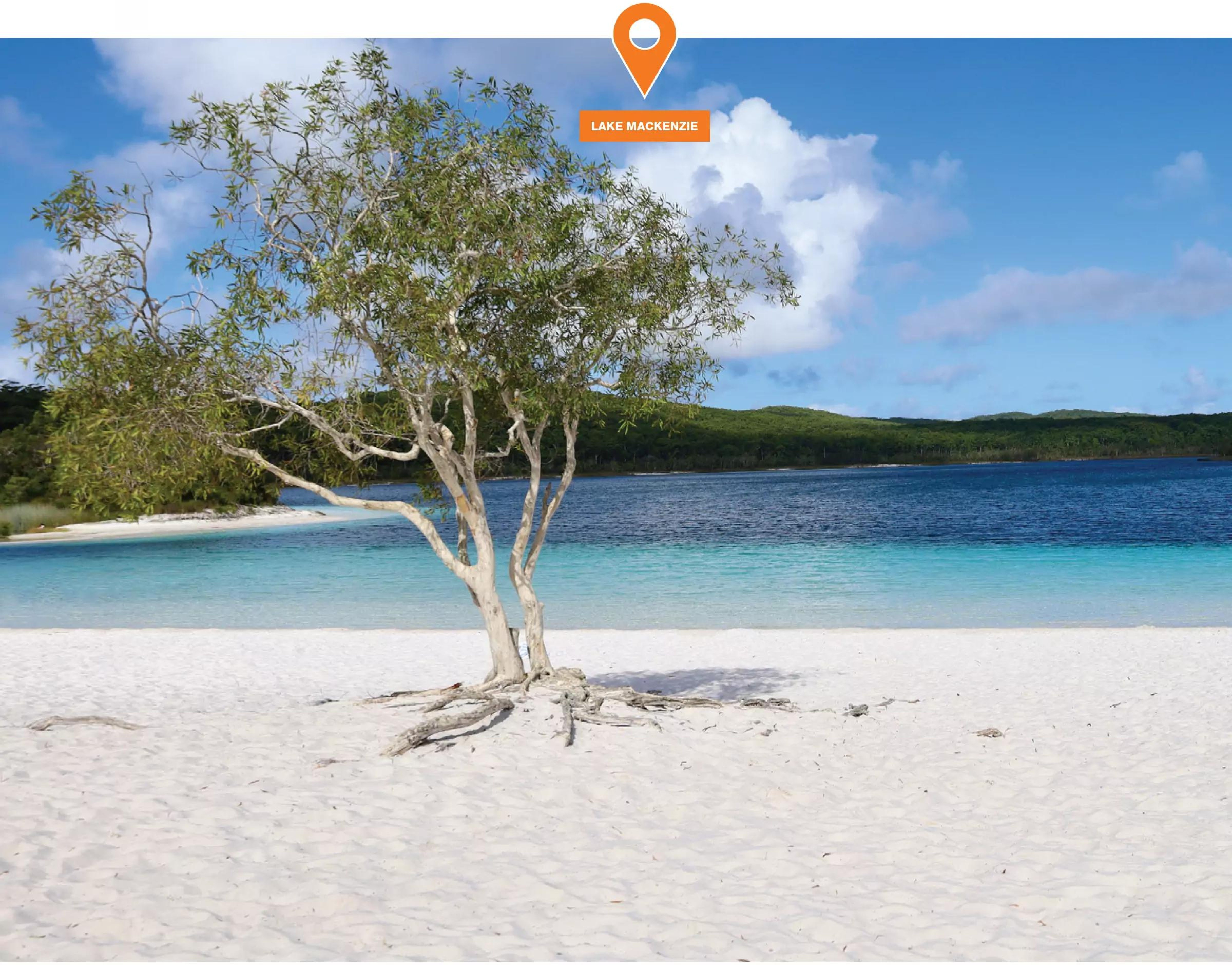
Next on my list was a historical gem I'd heard about from friends – Postons' Logging Camp. The walking track to the old site isn't marked, but with a bit of online research you can track it down. Back when timber was in hot demand, K'gari was dotted with logging camps. Operations kicked off in 1863, long before the island was protected, with massive Kauri, Hoop and Cypress pines taken, along with Blackbutt, Tallowwood and Satinay (a type of turpentine) trees. Thankfully, logging finally ceased in 1991, just before K'gari was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Today, Postons' camp feels like a step back in time. Dozens of old machines, log trucks, dozers and even an abandoned bus are slowly rusting into the landscape. The remains of workshops lie with their roofs collapsed, concrete slabs and service pits scattered about, while a few cottages still stand just as they were left when the workers walked away. Wandering through

> I can't believe it's taken me more than 30 years to finally set foot on K'gari



HISTORIC SITE
Removal of any object
will result in prosecution



It's all sand driving on the island so air down before you get off the barge or risk getting stuck the moment you hit the beach

Lake McKenzie is easily one of the island's top five must-see spots

the relics, I couldn't help but wonder – should this gear have been moved and preserved, or is it better left here to slowly return to nature?

The camp itself was built high on a hill, well away from the mozzies and midges that plagued the lower ground, and to catch the cooling summer breeze.

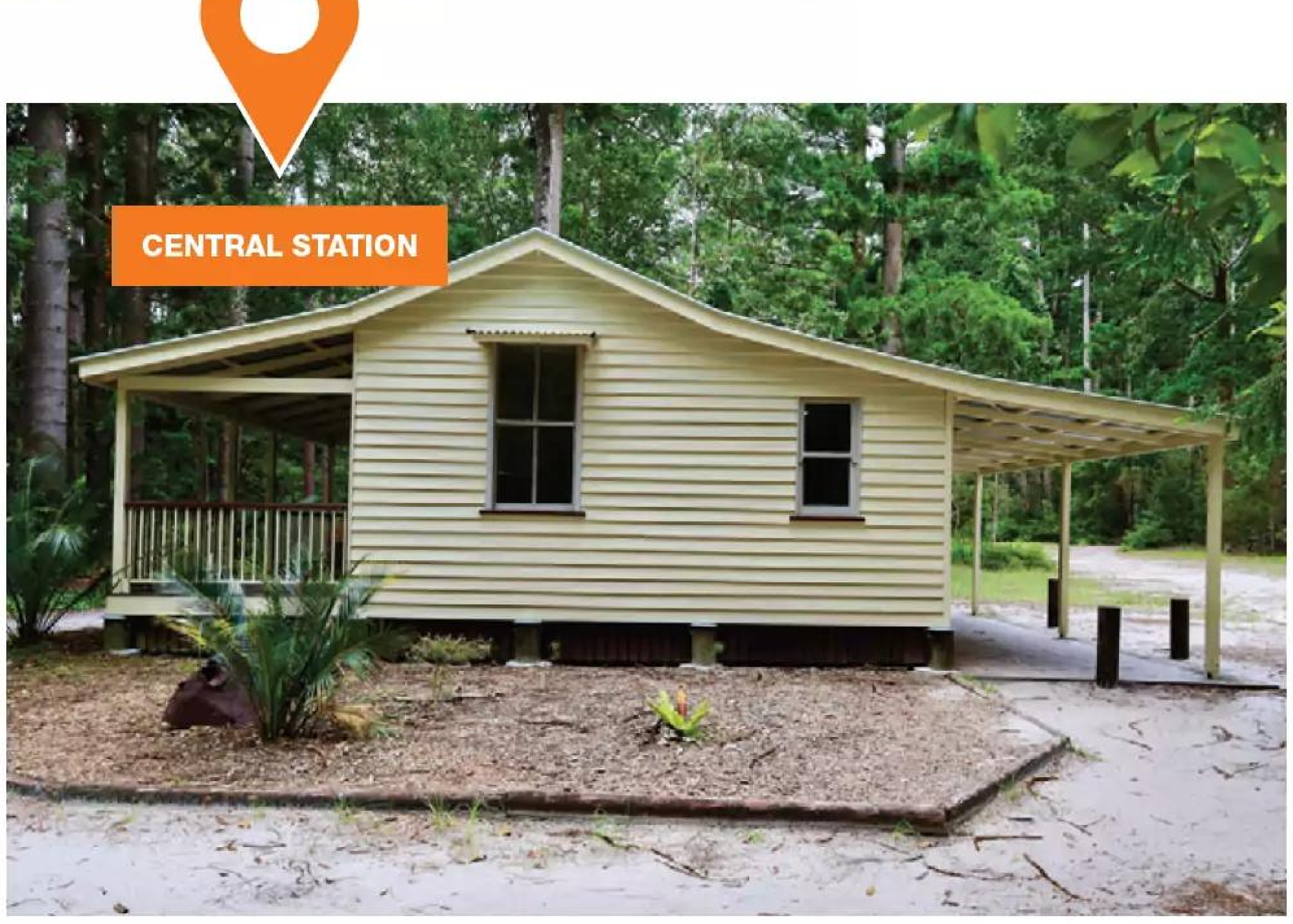
After a few days exploring the western side of the island – and sampling a bit of resort life – it was time to head inland towards Central Station. Driving the sandy tracks beneath towering trees that were spared when logging ceased is a mind-blowing experience. Today the forests are dense and thriving, with lush undergrowth and giants that somehow draw enough nutrients from the sand to not only survive, but flourish.

Central Station is a fascinating spot that was once the island's main hub. From the 1920s through to the 1950s it was home to nearly 30 houses, a school and machinery sheds. When logging ceased in 1991, the site was reborn as a visitor hub, with boardwalks along the creek, informative signage and a few relics still hiding among the trees.

With a campsite booked on the east coast, I pushed on after exploring Central Station. Crossing the island via its sandy tracks is no race – the surfaces can be rough after heavy traffic, especially on the main routes. One thing I quickly noticed is that the big 4x4 tourist buses aren't keen on sharing the track, so it's often best to pull over and let them lumber past.

K'gari is dotted with more than 40 freshwater lakes, some more famous than others. I made a beeline for the stunning and ever-popular Lake McKenzie, with its warm waters and blindingly white sand – easily one of the island's top five must-see spots. For something quieter, Lake Allom is worth a visit with its thriving turtle population, Lake Birrabeen rivals McKenzie for its crystal-white sand, and Basin Lake offers a unique setting perched high on a sand dune.

Camping options are spread right across K'gari, including Central Station, but most visitors gravitate to the east coast. I set up in Camping Zone 1, tucked behind a dune to take the sting out of the easterly winds. The only let-down is that fires aren't permitted anywhere on the island, but



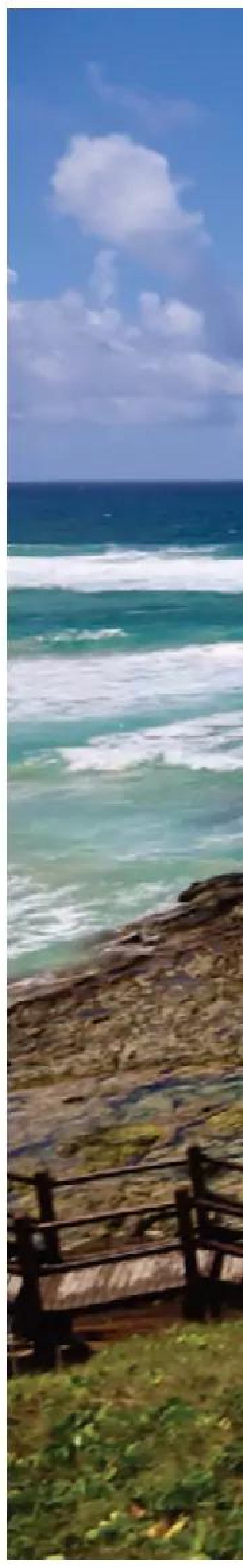
CENTRAL STATION

K'gari Explorer Tours

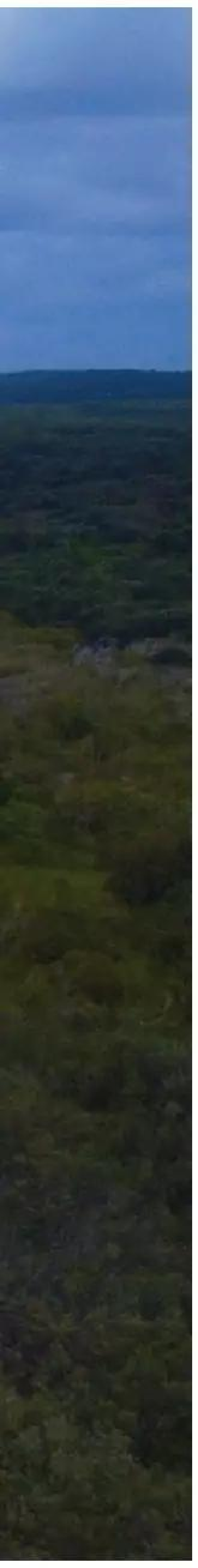
the location more than made up for it – just a short stroll over the dune each morning to watch the sunrise and the steady stream of 4x4 traffic racing north and south to meet the barges.

After a peaceful night listening to the ocean, I headed north along the east coast to explore the island's busiest side. Things get pretty hectic here, with road rules enforced much like the mainland. Highlights along the strip include the rusting hulk of the Maheno wreck, a dip in the Champagne Pools, a lazy float down Eli Creek and a bite to eat at Orchid Beach. For the keen, you can push all the way to the tip and camp at Sandy Cape. Dingoes are a common sight on this side, especially around tourist hot spots – when I visited, they showed little fear of people while scrounging for food.

I've only scratched the surface of what K'gari has to offer. Beyond the driving and scenery, there's the island's fascinating natural history, its European discovery and, most importantly, the enduring presence of the Butchulla people, who have called this place home for thousands of years. One thing's for sure – I'll be back.



CHAMPAGNE POOLS



Dingoes are common on the island and should be observed from a distance; never feed, chase or interact with them

↑ Central Station 3 km
↑ Lake McKenzie 12km
↑ Kingfisher Bay 18 km
↑ Eurong 12km
LAND CRUISER
KS 2199

## K'GARI, QLD

# TRAVEL PLANNER

### WHERE IS K'GARI

About 360km north of Brisbane, K'gari is the world's largest sand island and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Home to the Butchulla people for thousands of years, its name means 'paradise' – a reflection of the island's culture, natural beauty and deep history. Formerly known as Fraser Island, K'gari is accessible by 4x4 via two barge services: one from Inskip Point in the south, and the other from River Heads near Hervey Bay.

### WHAT TO DO ON THE ISLAND

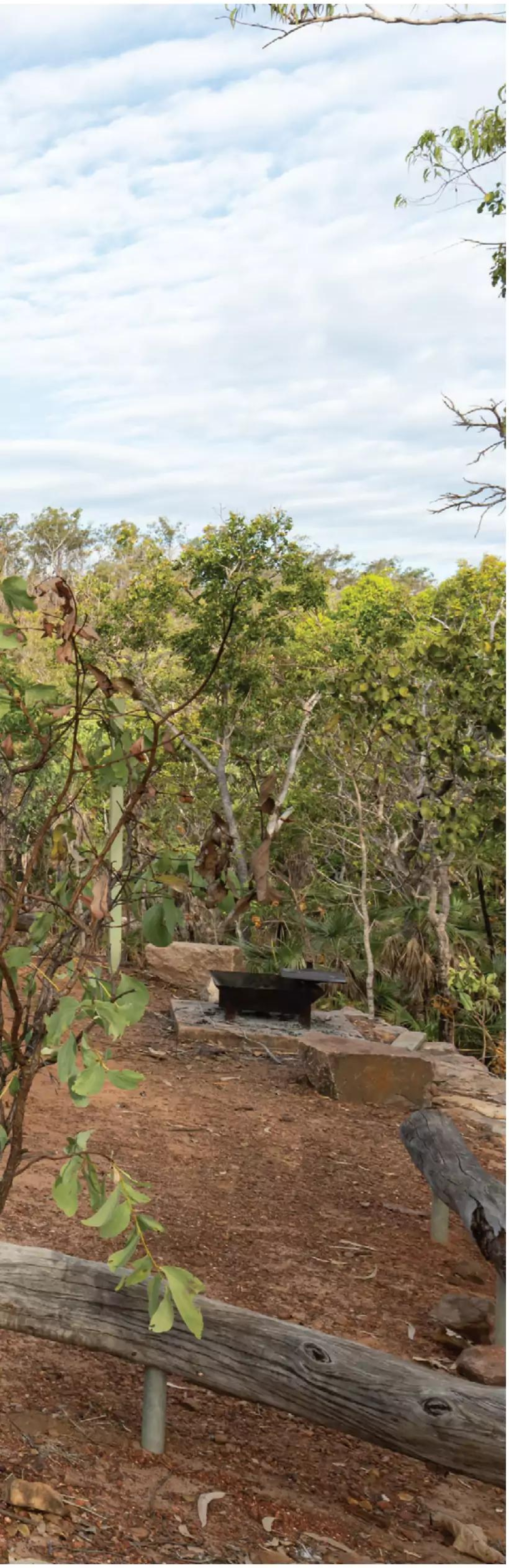
A better question might be: what can't you do on K'gari? The island is famous for its swimming holes – both salt and freshwater – along with challenging inland 4x4 tracks and epic beach driving. Add to that a wealth of Indigenous culture, plenty of European history and some of the best beach and offshore fishing you'll ever find.

Accommodation options range from the two island resorts to multiple campgrounds scattered across the coast and interior. No 4x4? No worries – hire one locally or join an organised tour to tick off the highlights.

### OTHER FACTS

With the amount of traffic K'gari sees each year, there are rules and regulations in place to keep both visitors and residents safe. A Queensland Parks and Wildlife permit is required to take your 4x4 onto the island, and all road signs must be obeyed.

The Inskip Point barge crossing – tide dependent – is where the true adventure begins, delivering you straight onto the beach for that iconic run north. From River Heads, the barge lands at Kingfisher Bay Resort, where you'll find accommodation, food outlets, fuel and resort facilities.



# UNLOCKING LITCHFIELD'S SECRET

WORDS AND PHOTOS GLENN MARSHALL

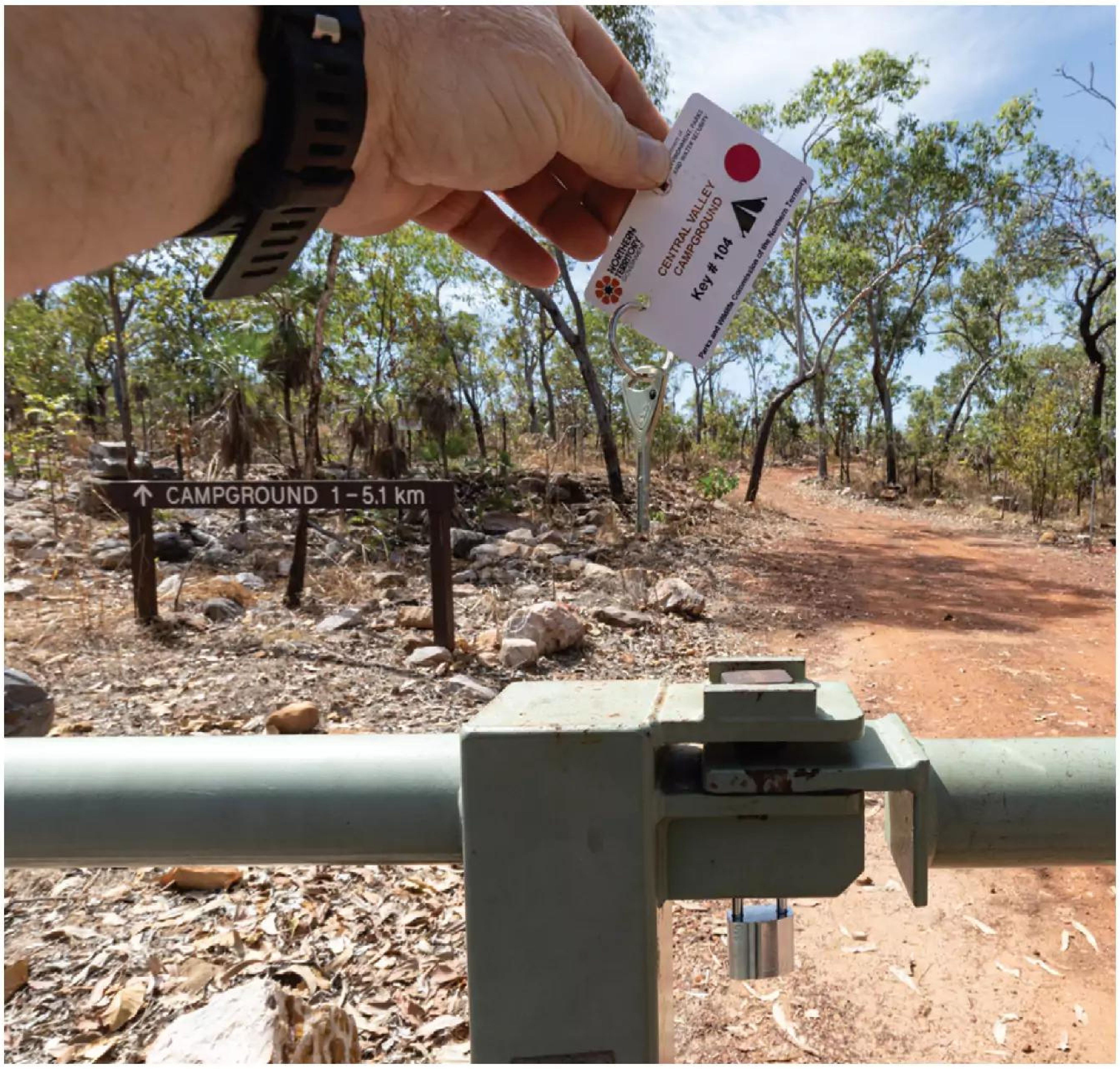
**Tucked away behind a locked gate in Litchfield National Park, Central Valley is a 4x4-only paradise of secret campsites, private swimming holes and untamed wilderness**

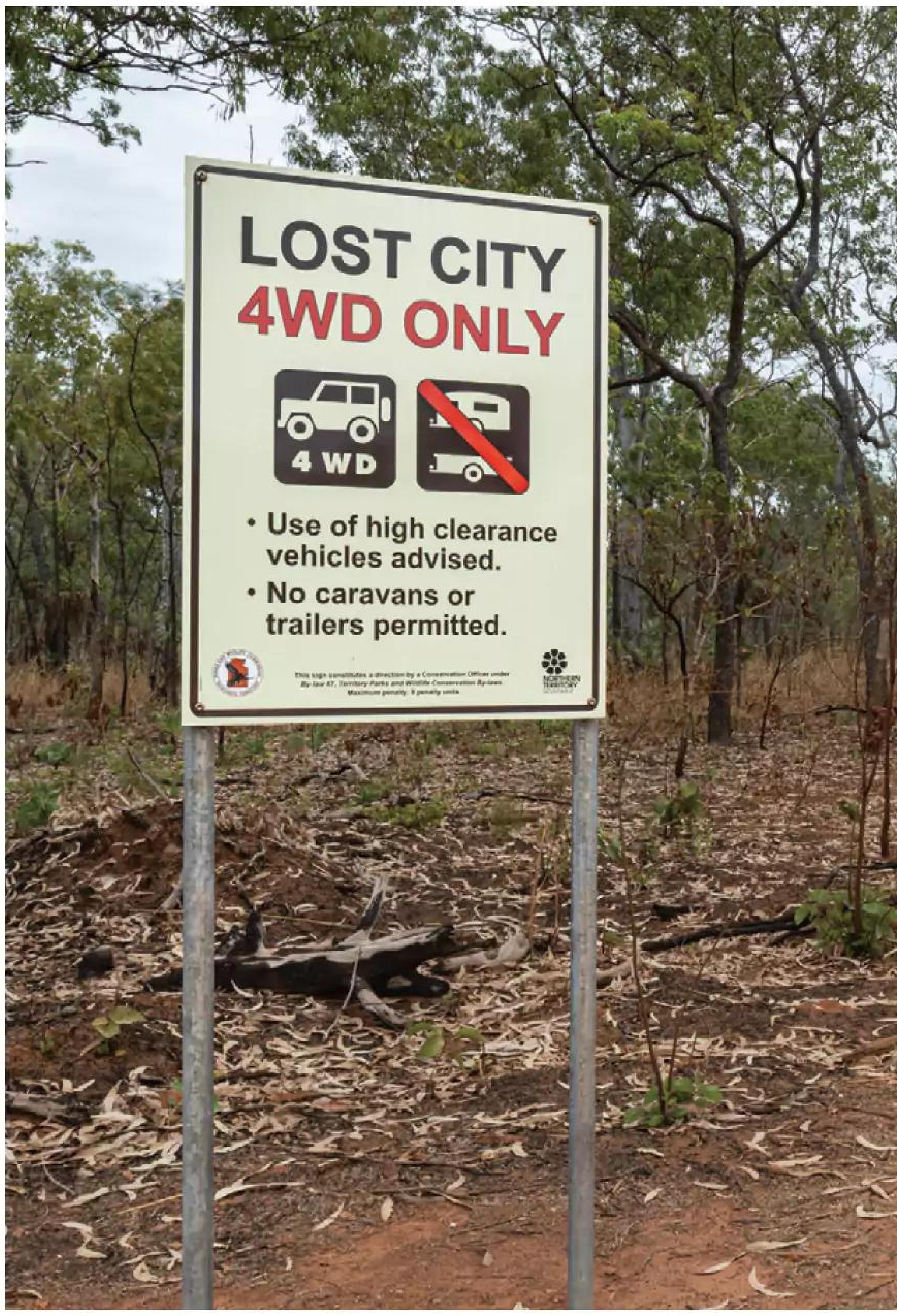
Most people think they know Litchfield National Park. Just over an hour south of Darwin, it's a Territory institution – a playground of waterfalls, safe swimming holes and magnetic termite mounds that features on almost every NT itinerary.

Ask the average traveller what Litchfield means to them and you'll hear the same names repeated: Florence Falls, Buley Rockhole, Wangi Falls, Tolmer Falls.

And they're right – those spots are magic. But what if I told you there's a side to Litchfield that doesn't make the brochures? A part of the park that requires a key to enter, where the crowds don't follow, where campsites are limited to just a handful, and you can literally roll out of your swag into your own private swimming hole.

That's Central Valley – a 4x4-only pocket of paradise, recently opened to the public, fiercely loved by locals and, in my mind, one of the best new camping destinations in the Top End.




LOST CITY
4WD ONLY
4 WD
• Use of high clearance vehicles advised.
• No caravans or trailers permitted.

## THE KEY TO KEEPING IT QUIET

I've explored plenty of national parks around the country, but Central Valley was the first time I'd needed to collect a key from Parks and Wildlife before heading in. You book online through the NT Parks website, then pick up the key from either the permits office in Palmerston, Territory Wildlife Park in Berry Springs, or by prior arrangement from the NT Parks office in Katherine. You'll need to show ID and pre-authorise $250 on a credit card before signing out the key.

There's something old-fashioned about it. In a world where everything's gone digital, here you are signing your name in a logbook and pocketing a physical key. You'll need it to unlock the heavy steel gates that mark the start of the Central Valley access tracks.

The key system might seem like a hassle, but it's actually a stroke of genius. It limits numbers, prevents the campground from being overrun, and preserves that special feeling of discovering a rare oasis. It also stops ghost campers. You're not just turning off the highway onto another tourist track – you're unlocking something most people will never experience. And here's a tip: you can return the key to the Parks office at Batchelor on your way out, which is handy if you're looping back north.

**A part of the park that requires a key to enter, where the crowds don't follow, and you can literally roll out of your swag into your own private swimming hole**

A short detour to Lost City is well worth it

## DETOUR WORTH TAKING: THE LOST CITY

If you're making the effort to grab the key and bump your way into Central Valley, you'd be mad not to add the Lost City to your itinerary. Sitting just off the same 4x4 access track, this collection of towering sandstone pillars feels like stumbling across an ancient civilisation hidden in the scrub.

Of course, it's not the ruins of a long-lost civilisation – it's a natural sandstone formation shaped by millions of years of wind and water erosion. The result is a sprawling maze of stone towers, narrow passages and sheer cliffs that eerily resemble crumbling city walls. Time your visit right and the low sun sets the rock ablaze in deep oranges and reds, creating an otherworldly atmosphere.

The track to the Lost City is the same one you'll take into Central Valley – rough, slow-going and strictly 4x4 only. It's about a 10km detour, with rocky sections and washouts that may call for low-range and careful tyre placement. Caravans and camper trailers are definitely a no-go.

Once you pull up at the small car park, you're free to wander among the formations. There aren't formal walking tracks – it's more about carefully picking your way between the sandstone towers and soaking it all in. The silence is profound, broken only by the rustle of a wallaby or the calls of cockatoos overhead.

Kids will love scrambling through the nooks and crannies, while photographers could spend hours chasing the play of light and shadow across the stone. Aim for early morning or late afternoon, when the colours are at their richest and the whole place feels even more mystical.

The Lost City is the perfect warm-up or wind-down for Central Valley. It's a short detour that adds another layer to your Litchfield adventure – one minute you're crawling through rocky 4x4 tracks, the next you're standing in the middle of a natural wonder that looks like it belongs on another continent.

Best of all, it's quiet. Like Central Valley, the Lost City doesn't see the tour bus crowds. It's strictly for 4x4 travellers, which keeps the numbers down and the experience all the richer.

When planning your trip to Central Valley, allow an extra couple of hours to explore the Lost City. It's a reminder of just how diverse Litchfield is – not just waterfalls and swimming holes, but geology on a grand, almost surreal scale.

High clearance is a benefit here

The track to Campgrounds 2 and 3 is 4x4 only

## ON THE ROAD TO THE VALLEY

The sealed road through Litchfield NP takes you past the well-known attractions, but as soon as you swing onto the Lost City track, the game changes. The bitumen ends, the corrugations begin, and you're firmly in 4x4 country.

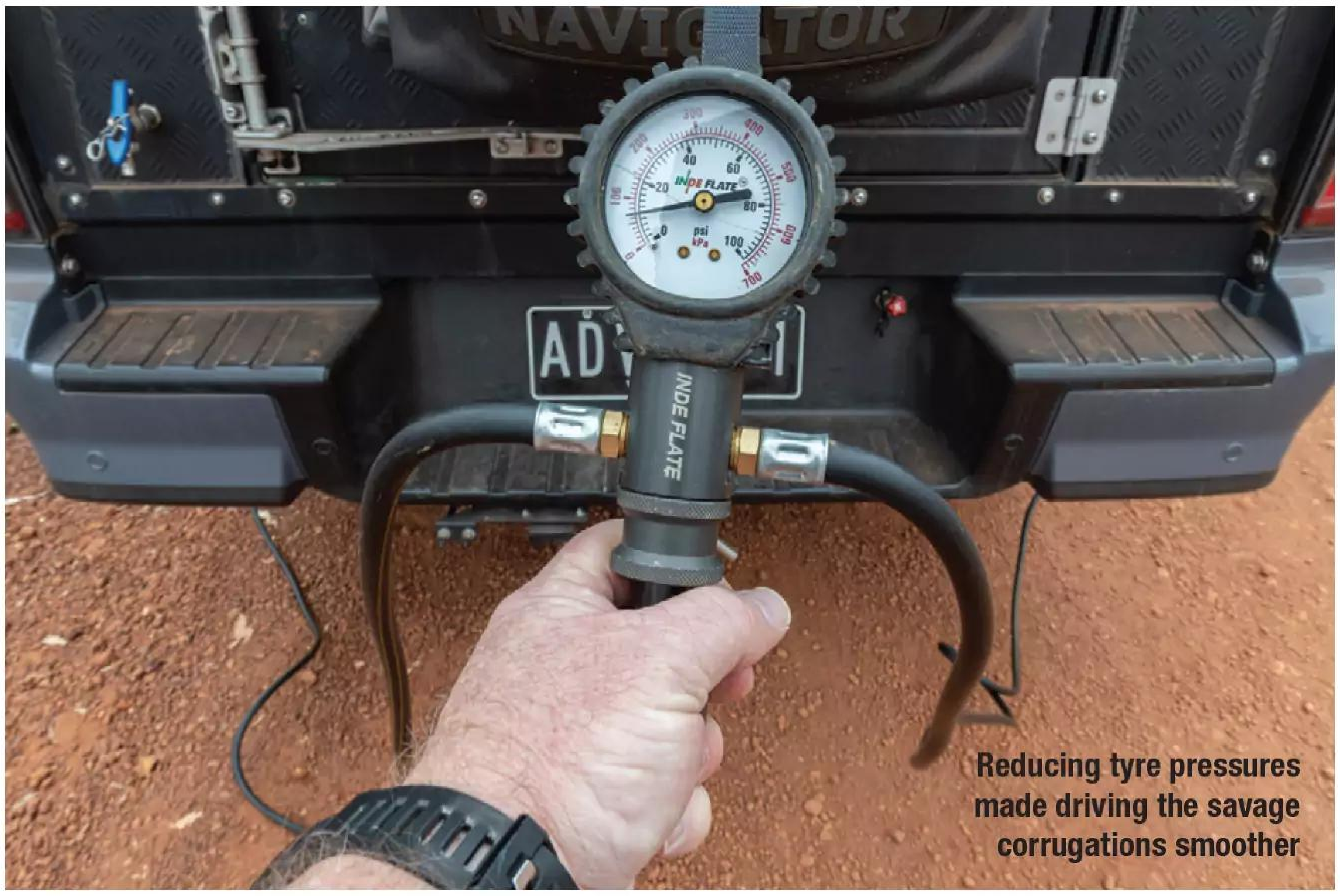
From the moment you leave the gate behind, the drive itself becomes part of the adventure. The track isn't the toughest in the NT by any stretch, but it's rough enough to demand respect. Expect washouts, deep ruts, rocky sections and a couple of creek crossings.

If you're towing a camper trailer, you'll need to know your rig and your clearances. Caravans? Forget it – they're not permitted here… and for good reason.

Campground 1, in particular, is only accessible to high-clearance 4x4 vehicles. This is definitely low-range country – the sort of track where dropping your tyre pressures makes all the difference. If you're running a long wheelbase or low sidesteps, be prepared for a few belly scrapes along the way.

By comparison, Campgrounds 2 and 3 are easier to reach, though you'll still want proper 4x4 gear under you. They're a good choice if you're not keen on testing your bash plates but still want that secluded bush-camp feel.

> **You're not just turning off the highway onto another tourist track – you're unlocking something most people will never experience**



Reducing tyre pressures made driving the savage corrugations smoother

## SETTING UP CAMP

Central Valley is neatly divided into three campgrounds, with a total of just 32 sites. That's it – 32 campsites across a massive valley, which means space, privacy and the kind of quiet you'll never find at Florence Falls.

### CAMPGROUND 1 – THE ADVENTURER'S PICK

Campground 1 is the toughest to reach, but it's also the most rewarding once you get there. The sites are small, shaded and strung along the East Reynolds River, with several backing directly onto the creek. That means private plunge pools right at camp – picture stepping out of your swag or off-road camper at sunrise, boiling the billy, and sliding straight into crystal-clear water without another soul in sight.

This is the campground for purists. No caravans, no big groups – just a handful of hardy travellers with well-set-up rigs. If you're chasing solitude, this is the pick.

### CAMPGROUND 2 – FAMILY-FRIENDLY AND ACCESSIBLE

A short drive further in, Campground 2 is more forgiving. The sites are larger, more spread out, and the river widens here into broad, shallow swimming holes perfect for kids. There's still enough depth for adults to cool off, but the sandy-bottomed shallows are safe for little ones to splash about under supervision.

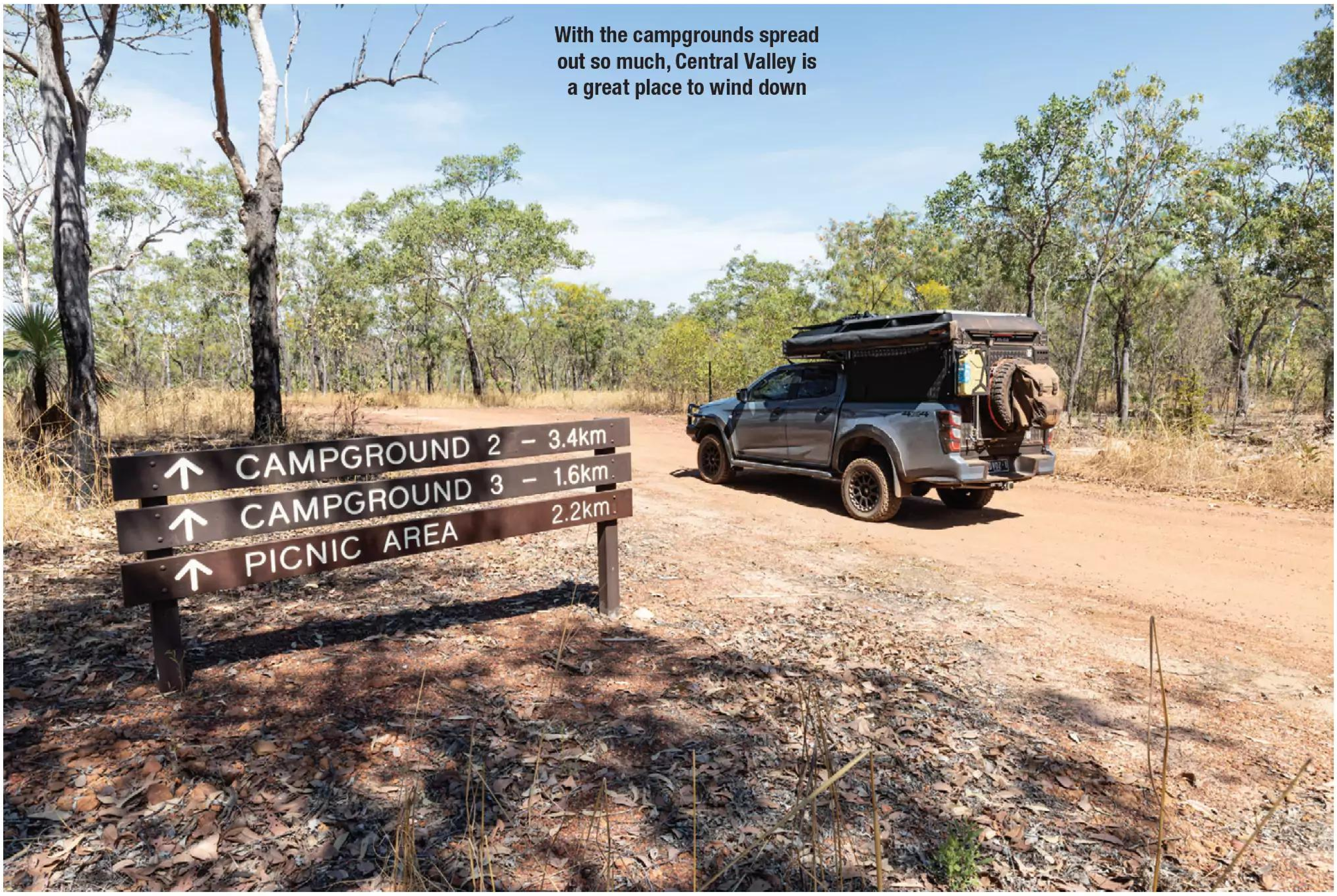
You'll also see more off-road camper trailers here. If you've got a family rig and want a balance between adventure and comfort, Campground 2 strikes it beautifully.

ACCESS TO
CAMPGROUNDS
BY ONLINE
BOOKING ONLY

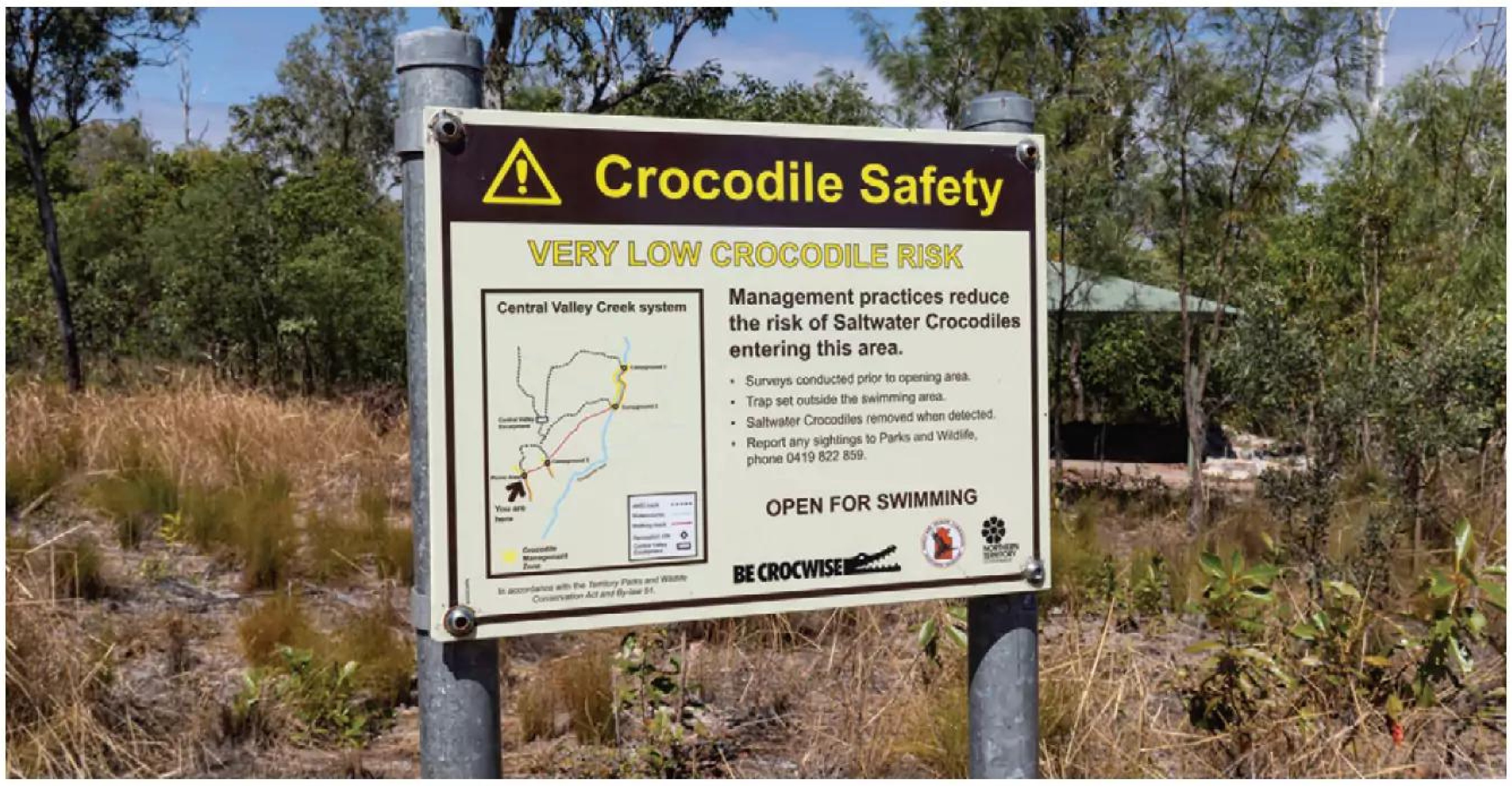
### CAMPGROUND 3 – SHADY AND SECLUDED

Campground 3 is the most easily accessible of the three, but that doesn't mean it lacks character. Tucked under big paperbarks and eucalypts, the sites are shady, private and only a stone's throw from the river. If you're not up for the rougher track into Campground 1 but still want the Central Valley experience, Campground 3 is ideal.

Each campground offers the same basic facilities: pit toilets, fire pits and the occasional picnic table. There are no showers, no water taps and no generators. It's bring-your-own everything – exactly as it should be.



With the campgrounds spread out so much, Central Valley is a great place to wind down


Crocodile Safety
VERY LOW CROCODILE RISK
Central Valley Creek system
Management practices reduce the risk of Saltwater Crocodiles entering this area.
Surveys conducted prior to opening area.
Trap set outside the swimming area.
Saltwater Crocodiles removed when detected.
Report any sightings to Parks and Wildlife, phone 0419 822 859.
OPEN FOR SWIMMING
BE CROCWISE

## SWIMMING HOLES GALORE

The East Reynolds River is the real star here. Unlike many other Top End creeks where saltwater crocodiles are a constant concern, Central Valley's swimming holes are croc-free during the dry season.

That's a game-changer – no second-guessing before diving in. Each campground has its own safe swimming spots, from sandy-bottomed pools where you can sit waist-deep with a cold drink to deeper rockholes where you can stretch out and float.

The water is cool, clear and utterly irresistible in the heat of the NT dry. Late afternoons are pure magic – the paperbarks glowing gold, dragonflies skimming the surface and kookaburras calling through the valley. At night, the pools reflect the stars, and if you're lucky, you might even hear the splash of a freshwater fish breaking the surface.

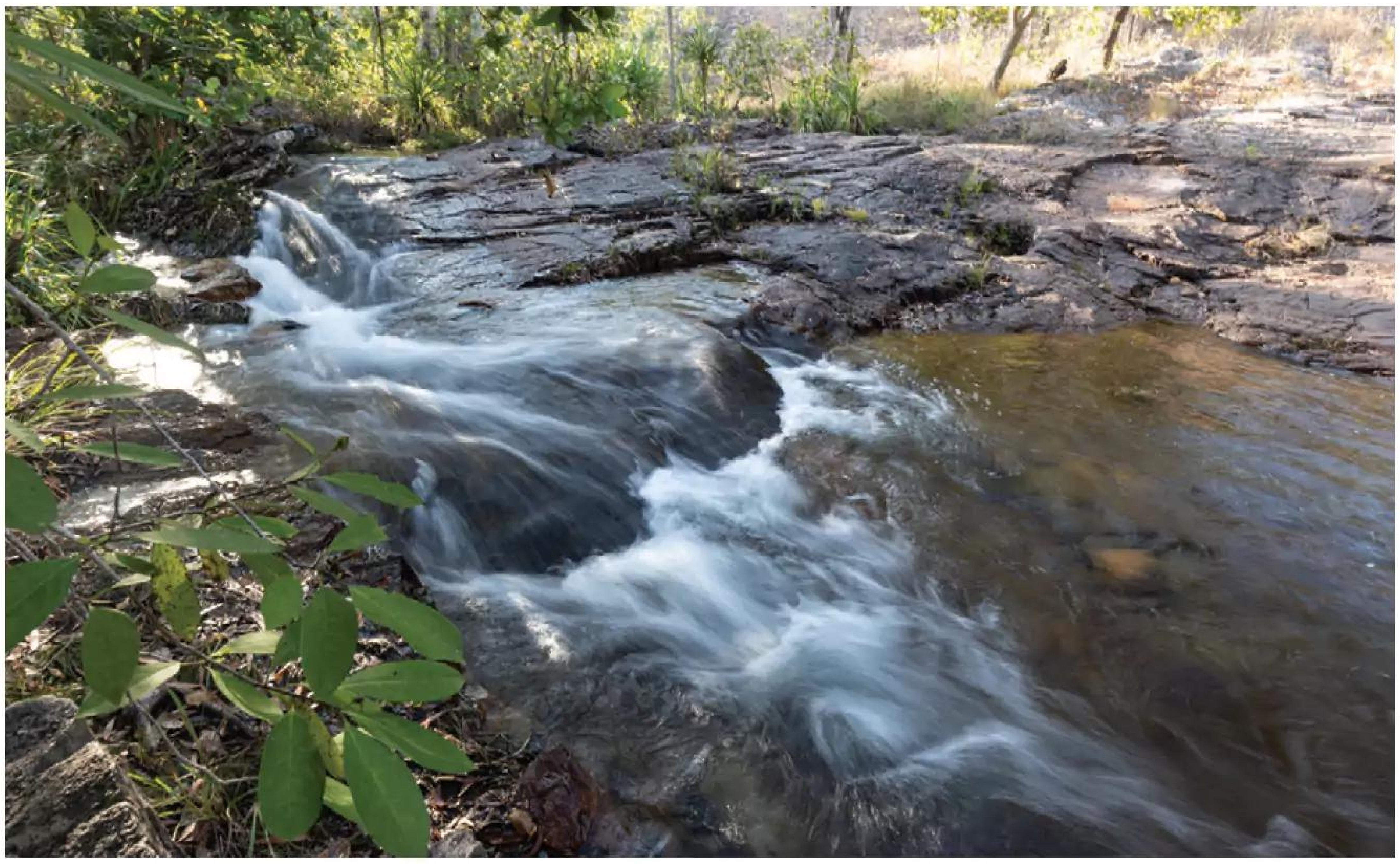
## WILDLIFE ENCOUNTERS

Camping in Central Valley means sharing the space with the locals – and not just the Territorians who'd rather keep it secret.

In the early mornings, agile wallabies graze on the edges of camp, while goannas meander through the pandanus.

The birdlife here is simply outstanding and on my visiit I spotted several rainbow bee-eaters, azure kingfishers and a noisy squadron of red-tailed black cockatoos overhead.

And at night, the bush really comes alive with the sounds and movement of wildlife. The eerie wails of bush stone-curlews echo across the valley, sugar gliders dart between the trees and, if you're lucky, you might spot a bandicoot scurrying through the undergrowth. For wildlife photographers, this place is a goldmine.



Trunk calls can be made here

CENTRAL VALLEY PHONE TREE
Telstra phone signal may be available at this location
ADVOZ 1
VICTORIA
4x4
Alu-Cab

Time your visit right and the low sun sets the rock ablaze in deep oranges and reds, creating an otherworldly atmosphere

## THE LAND AND ITS STORIES

It's important to remember that Central Valley, like all of Litchfield NP, sits on Limilngan-Wulna and Koongurrukun Country.

This land has been cared for and respected for thousands of years, long before national parks were marked on maps.

The East Reynolds River, the surrounding escarpments and even the campsites themselves all form part of cultural landscapes with deep significance to the Indigenous people. Parks and Wildlife, working with Traditional Owners, manage Central Valley carefully to protect both its natural and cultural values.

As travellers, the best way to show respect is to tread lightly, follow the rules and leave no trace of your visit.

The rock formations at Laso City are impressive

Erosion has created works of art

## WHY THE LOCALS LOVE IT

Talk to anyone from Darwin who's spent time in Central Valley and you'll hear the same thing: don't tell too many people about it!

And it's easy to see why. For years, Darwin locals have treated Litchfield NP as their backyard getaway, but with the main falls and swimming holes often packed with tourists, Central Valley offers something different – space, peace and the feeling you've got a corner of the park to yourself.

The key system keeps numbers down, and the limited campsites mean it'll never be overrun. It's become the weekend escape of choice for those in the know. Outside school holidays, bookings are usually straightforward, and you might end up sharing a campground with just a handful of others.

Have you ever licked the flower of a grevillea (above)? So sweet

## REFLECTIONS ON THE VALLEY

For me, Central Valley sums up everything I love about four-wheel driving in the NT. It's not about conquering extreme tracks or covering massive distances – it's about finding places the bitumen doesn't reach, where you can still feel that sense of discovery, and where the effort to get there pays off in spades.

Sitting by the East Reynolds River with a fire crackling and the night sounds of the Top End all around, I felt like I'd stumbled onto something special. And in many ways, I had – a part of Litchfield the locals would rather keep secret, a place where you need a key to enter and where the reward is peace, solitude and endless swimming holes. Yes, Litchfield is famous for its waterfalls, but the real treasure might just be hidden in its Central Valley.

With bitumen taking up much of Litchfield NP, it's refreshing to lock it into low range

## LITCHFIELD NP, NT

# FAST FACTS

**WHERE:**
Central Valley, Litchfield National Park, NT

**ACCESS:**
4x4 only via the Lost City track. Key required.

**BOOKINGS:** Online through NT Parks – nt.gov.au/parks/find-a-park/Litchfield-national-park/central-valley

**KEYS:** Collect from the permits office in Palmerston, Territory Wildlife Park in Berry Springs, or the NT Parks office in Katherine (by prior arrangement). Keys can also be returned at Batchelor.

**SEASON:** Dry season only (May-Nov). Closed during the wet – check NT Parks for updates.

**FACILITIES:** Pit toilets, fire pits, picnic tables. No water, showers or power.

**CAMPSITES:**
32 sites across three campgrounds. Unpowered.

**PRACTICALITIES**
Here's what you'll need to make the most of Central Valley:
**Vehicle:** A high-clearance 4x4 is essential. Low range is handy, and a snorkel's a bonus if water levels rise early in the season.
**Tyres:** Drop pressures to around 22-24psi for the rougher sections. Carry a compressor to reinflate once you're back on the blacktop.
**Towing:** Off-road camper trailers are fine if you're confident, but caravans aren't permitted.
**Camping gear:** Swags, rooftop tents or compact setups work best. Sites aren't huge, so leave the annex walls at home.
**Supplies:** Bring all food, water and firewood. There are no bins, so pack it in and pack it out.

# CANOPY CHOICES

WORDS DEX FULTON

From basic fibreglass shells to high-tech frame-mount builds, ute canopies have come a long way. Here's what you need to know before setting up your rig.

Australia loves a well set-up ute. In fact, three of the top five best-selling vehicles here are utes. The popularity of the humble utility has long been unmatched – and still is. Fair enough too. Few vehicles can compete when it comes to all-round versatility, scope for modification and sheer toughness for tackling this wide brown land's most remote tracks.

And as you'd expect, ute canopies are booming in popularity too.

What was once limited to a simple fibreglass shell bolted to the top edge of a styleside tub has now evolved into full slide-on canopies or frame-mounted units. They're available in steel, aluminium or even high-end composites like carbon fibre. You can opt for an all-Aussie build or an imported job, and the fit-out options are almost endless. In fact, there are probably more ways to customise a canopy than there are TikTok dance trends — and if you're too old to get that reference, consider yourself lucky.

So, here's what you need to know when it comes to buying your next ute canopy.

# CANOPY VS TUB TOPPER

This is often the first big choice to make: do you go for a canopy that fully replaces your existing tub, or stick with what you've got and simply bolt on a shell over the top to create a sealed, weatherproof space for your gear?

There's no right or wrong answer here – it's all subjective – so let's run through a few pros and cons of each option.

With a canopy you get a fully sealed "box" customised to your needs. They don't leak, they're more dust-resistant and often weigh less than a steel tub and topper – saving you all-important GVM kilos. Side access is also far better, with most canopies featuring gas-strut-assisted doors on either side. The downside? They generally cost more.

A tub-topper is (relatively) straightforward to install, gives you far more usable space than a bare tub and – unlike most canopies – still allows rear access (though to be fair, there are a few three-door canopies on the market. However, compared side by side, a dedicated canopy will generally offer more internal space than a tub-topper.

Do you go for a canopy that fully replaces your existing tub, or stick with what you've got and simply bolt on a shell over the top?

# FRAME MOUNT VS TRAY MOUNT

So you've decided on a tub-replacement canopy. The next choice is whether to have a flat tray with the canopy mounted on top, or go for a direct frame-mount canopy. Again, it comes down to your needs – but the short answer is to go for a tray-mount if you'll need to remove the canopy. For example, if you're hauling tools during the week, you can pull it off in the garage on Friday arvo and load up the dirtbikes for the weekend.

If removal isn't a requirement, then a frame-mount canopy is the clear winner. Less weight and more space – what's not to like?

Chassis-mounted canopies save weight and usually provide more interior space plus a lower floor height, making access easier

# ALLOY VS STEEL VS COMPOSITE

This choice usually comes down to weight and cost. As a rule of thumb, aluminium is about two-thirds as strong as steel and one-third the weight, so thicker-gauge sheets can be used to retain strength while still saving a significant amount of kilos. Alloy also won't rust – though it's often more expensive. Does that mean alloy is the best option? Absolutely not. There are plenty of great steel canopies out there, and if you want something that can take a knock and is super-easy to repair, steel makes a lot of sense.

And because it's no longer 1987, more modern composites such as glass-reinforced plastic and carbon fibre are increasingly being usedand offer all the strength of an all-metal unit at a lower weight, which is hard to complain about.

iKAMPER
MSA 4X4
MSA
4X4 ACCESSORIES

A big custom canopy allows you to carry more gear but consider the weight and how it effects the performance and legality of your ride

# STRAYA VS THE WORLD

There are plenty of high-quality units being built and imported from overseas – to say otherwise would be wrong. Anything made in China, or anywhere else, is manufactured to a design and a cost. If the company you're buying through has specified a high level of quality and functionality in their design, that's exactly what you'll get. So it definitely pays to shop around.

That said, buying Australian-made can save you the research and let you hand over your hard-earned knowing you'll get a top product. Australian companies are setting the global standard for canopy manufacturing – and with good reason and some are even expoting to international markets where Aussie toughness is recognised. If quality is your number-one priority, this is the end of town you should be shopping in.

# EXTERNAL INCLUSIONS

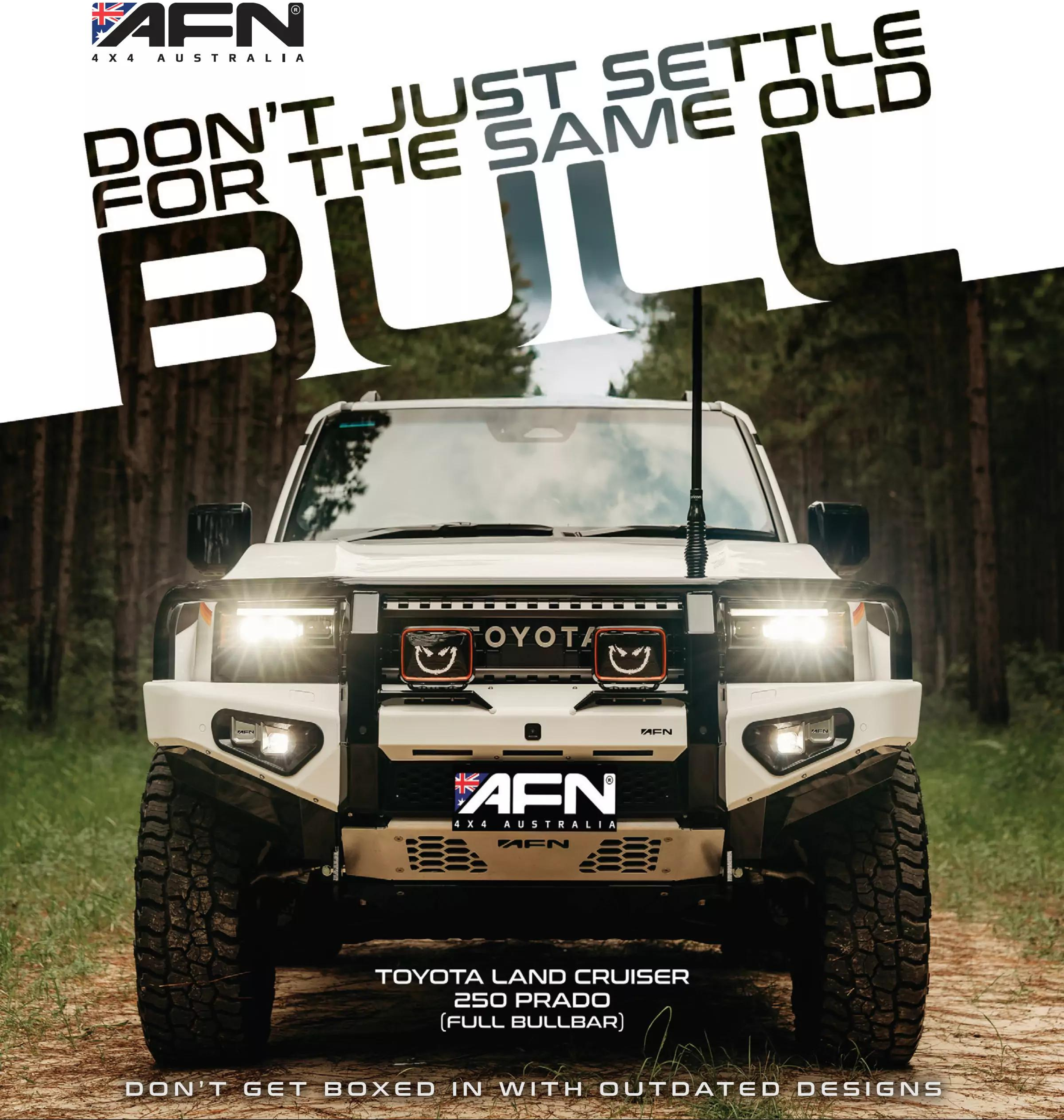
Once you've chosen your canopy brand, it's time for the fun stuff.

The list of gear you can mount on the outside of a canopy is as long as your arm – and, as always, it comes down to your specific needs. Racks, ladders, awning mounts, solar panels, fuel-can holders, tyre carriers, rooftop-tent mounts, hi-lift jacking points, underslung toolboxes, fuel/water/air tanks, cameras and lights… all are common inclusions.

The best part is the level of customisation. There's very little that can't be tailored to your exact requirements.

Tub-topper canopies can still be loaded up with external and internal extras

With a canopy you get a fully sealed "box" customised to your needs. They don't leak, they're more dust-resistant and often weigh less than a steel tub and topper


AFN
4X4 AUSTRALIA
DON'T JUST SETTLE FOR THE SAME OLD
BULL
TOYOTA LAND CRUISER
250 PRADO
(FULL BULLBAR)
DON'T GET BOXED IN WITH OUTDATED DESIGNS

AFN 4X4 AUSTRALIA

1300 AFN 4x4 | www.afn4x4.com.au

sales@afn4x4.com.au | 85 Kabi Circuit, Deception Bay, Qld 4508

facebook.com/AFN4x4australia

VISIT WWW.AFN4X4.COM.AU FOR A DEALER NEAR YOU

# INTERNAL EXTRAS

That theme continues inside too. Complete lithium battery systems can be fitted under floors or behind false walls – and expanded into full kitchen, fridge/freezer, lighting, monitoring, charging and entertainment systems.

Other popular inclusions include drawer set-ups, wall mounts for tools and recovery gear, and dedicated storage for items such as surfboards, chainsaws or even ATVs.

We're also seeing more modern conveniences in camping canopies these days. Dedicated espresso machines, shower tents and induction cooktops are no longer uncommon.

Having a ute canopy – no matter the design, the material or the country of origin – gives you the best possible platform to build your ideal camping and touring set-up. Think of it as a blank canvas on which you can create just about anything you can imagine. And when you're done, make sure you send us a few pics.

Everything including the kitchen sink can be added as a slide-out for your canopy

# Yakima mod system is launching in Australia

## THE YAKIMA MOD BRINGS TOUGH, CUSTOMISABLE REAR STORAGE TO AUSSIE 4WDS

Yakima's MOD System is about to land in Australia, giving 4x4 owners a practical, modular solution for hauling gear.

The system will be available from late-October 2025 through authorised dealers, with the HomeBase starting at $1079, MOD Topper from $749 and accessories from $25.

"This is the gear-hauling solution Aussie drivers have been waiting for," said Tracy Schweitzer, Senior Brand Manager for Yakima Australia. "The MOD System is built tough for serious off-roaders, but it's just as at home with busy families juggling school runs, weekend sports and spontaneous getaways. From campfires to commutes, it's ready for whatever life throws in the back."

At the core is the MOD HomeBase, the base unit of the drawer system. It installs in minutes with no drilling or modifications required. Built from sturdy aluminium, it carries 45kg in the drawer and 113kg on top. Heavy-duty slides and solid construction give a quiet, premium feel on- or off-road, while internal dividers and built-in attachment points allow connection of MOD Toppers, stretch nets or an additional HomeBase. Drawers can also be locked with Yakima SKS Lock Cores (sold separately).

The MOD Topper is a half-side drawer add-on that attaches securely to the HomeBase in seconds using Yakima's torque-limiting tool, no extra tools required. Its aluminium construction handles tough use, while heavy-duty slides ensure smooth operation on any terrain. Rated for 23kg, it's ideal for tools, spares or everyday gear, and is also compatible with SKS locks.

The Australian MOD System includes robust drawer units, heavy-duty fridge slides and stretch nets to keep gear secure over corrugations, bush tracks and repeated loading. Already praised as a game changer in the USA, MOD has been tailored for Australia and built to withstand dust, mud and coastal spray.

**Pricing:**
HomeBase: From **$1079**
MOD Topper: From **$749**
Accessories: From **$25**

# RADIO CONFIDENCE

## WE TEST THE UNIDEN X-TRAK PRO OUTBACK KIT

WORDS AND PHOTOS GLENN MARSHALL

Reliable communication is one of those things you don't fully appreciate until you really need it. Out on the tracks – whether you're tackling the Victorian High Country or the Canning Stock Route – a UHF isn't just for chatting with mates. It's about safety, guidance and coordination.

The Uniden X-TRAK Pro Outback Kit isn't just a single radio but a complete package built around Uniden's flagship X-TRAK 80 Pro 5W UHF base unit. Bundled with it are a matching 5W X-TRAK 50 Pro handheld, an antenna and a suite of accessories. It's designed as an all-in-one comms solution, keeping you covered both in the vehicle and on foot.

### DIY FITTING

The installation was one of the easiest I've done. I tucked the base unit under the centre console, powered it through the fuse box, and mounted the mic where it was easy to reach. The kit includes everything you need – a quick-release bracket, extension cable and magnetic mic mount – so it feels purpose-built for DIY installers..

It's a well-rounded package. Having both the 80 Pro base unit in the cab and the 50 Pro handheld in your pocket means you're covered for long-haul touring and around-camp comms straight out of the box.

## BLUETOOTH CONNECTIVITY

The standout feature of the X-TRAK Pro compared with older UHF radios I've used is its Bluetooth connectivity. Pair it with the X-TRAK app on your phone and you unlock some genuinely useful functions.

The app lets you adjust radio settings, manage Selcall contacts, and even share your location with others running the same system. On group trips, being able to glance at a map and see where everyone is within UHF range takes the guesswork out of convoy travel. You can also link the unit to a Bluetooth headset or your in-car speakers, which makes a big difference when cabin noise picks up.

## LOCATION TRACKING

One of the smartest features in the system is location tracking. Both the X-TRAK 80 Pro in the vehicle and the X-TRAK 50 Pro handheld have built-in GPS, allowing them to send and receive location data over UHF. On the mic display you can see the distance and direction of other X-TRAK units in your group, while the app maps it all out in real time. In convoy driving, it removes the stress of wondering if someone's dropped back, and around camp it's an easy way to keep tabs on the kids – or anyone carrying the handheld. It's a level of situational awareness you simply don't get with a standard UHF.

## REPLAY FUNCTION

One of the features I've used the most is Instant Replay. The radio automatically records the last few minutes of received messages, and with a single button press you can play them back.

## ANTENNAS TO MATCH TERRAIN

The Outback Kit ships with a 3.0 dBi ground-independent antenna, which is a good compromise between range and coverage but , like tyres or suspension, antennas aren't one-size-fits-all terrain.

## ERGONOMICS

The remote speaker microphone feels solid in the hand, the buttons are easy to find without looking, and the OLED display stays bright and clear even in harsh sunlight.

## EASY AND CUSTOMISABLE

Straight out of the box, the X-TRAK Pro is simple: pick a channel, press to talk, and you're away. But if you want to customise it, there's plenty of scope. The programmable Smart Keys let you assign shortcuts to the functions you use most, like instant channel recall, monitor mode or squelch adjustment. If you're the type who likes fine-tuning, there's also Selcall, a voice scrambler and more than 150 CTCSS/DCS codes to filter out unwanted chatter. The beauty is that you can use it as a straightforward UHF or dive into the advanced features – it doesn't force complexity on you.

## HANDHELD ADVANTAGE

The kit also includes the Uniden X-TRAK 50 Pro handheld radio, a 5-watt handheld UHF that offers the same advanced capabilities as the mobile unit. When I am with others, though, it's invaluable around camp, on foot, or guiding a mate through a tricky section. It keeps me in touch without being tied to the car.

## DURABILITY

The X-TRAK 50 Pro handheld is equally tough, with IP67 water resistance to cope with most conditions – though I won't be leaving it in my pocket if I go for a swim in the river.

## ON THE TRACKS

Uniden
40
XTRAK PRO
MEM
SCN
SQL
TRI
CTC
DCS
MENU
REPLAY

Day-to-day, the X-TRAK Pro has been a pleasure to use. Comms are crisp, range is solid, and it feels like a system designed for touring rather than just an upgraded version of an old-school UHF. It's reliable, intuitive, and I've never felt like I had to wrestle with the menus to get it doing what I want. That's worth a lot when you're a couple of thousand kilometres from home.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

The Uniden X-TRAK Pro Outback Kit is one of the best UHF setups I've used. It's easy to install, the controls are intuitive, and the mix of Bluetooth, Instant Replay, GPS tracking and a well-designed mic makes it genuinely practical in the real world. The supplied antenna is a solid all-rounder, and with the option of higher-gain aerials you can tailor the setup to wherever you're headed. Add the X-TRAK 50 Pro handheld for flexibility outside the cab and you've got a system that works just as well for solo tourers as it does for families.

For me, the biggest compliment is that I don't have to think about it anymore – it just works. And when gear fades into the background like that, you know it's doing its job.

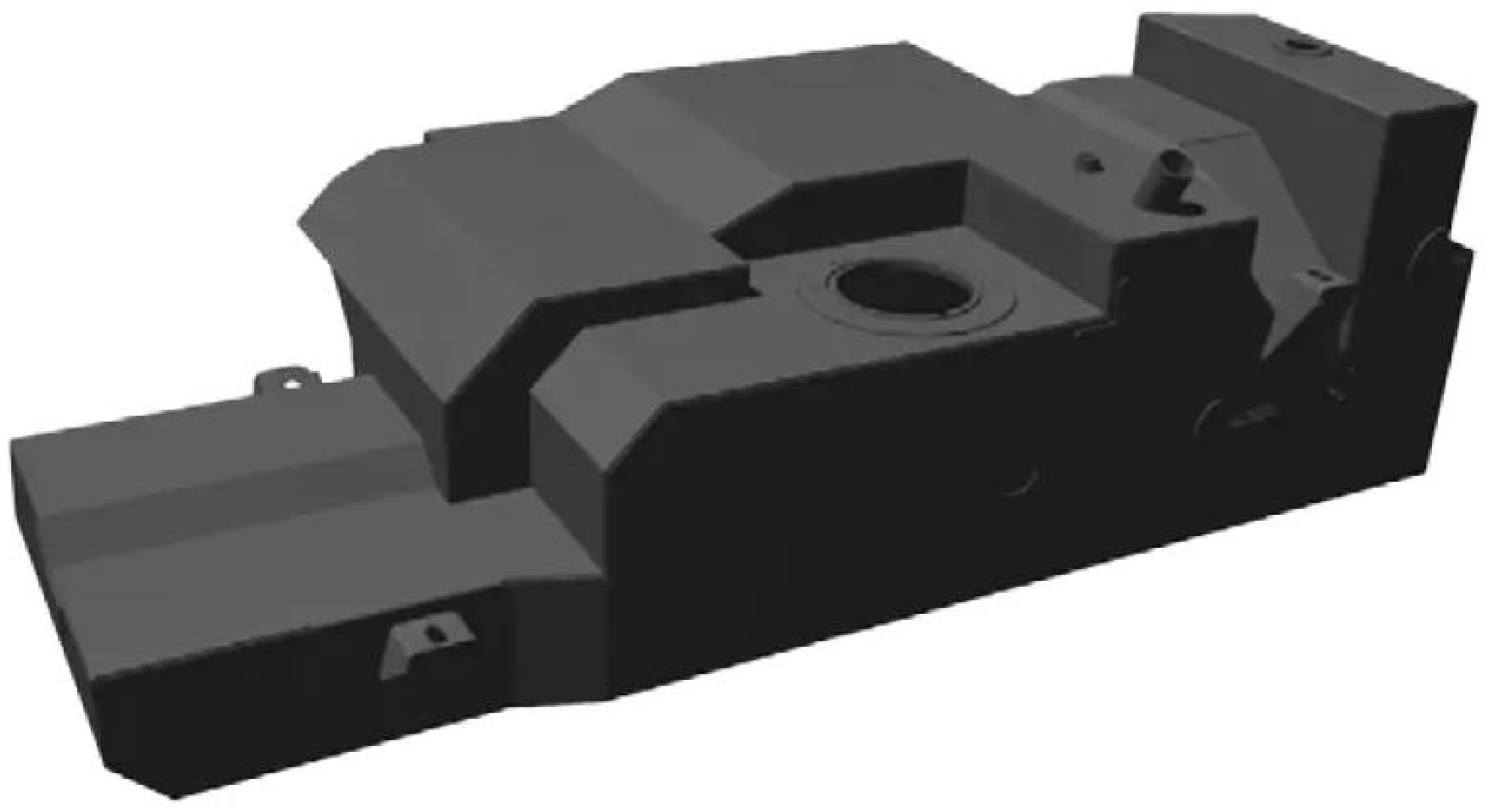
**RATED**

**RRP: $899.95**

**AVAILABLE FROM:**
**www.uniden.com.au**

**WE SAY: A complete comms package with the X-TRAK 80 Pro base unit, X-TRAK 50 Pro handheld, and all the gear to get started. Practical, easy to use and feature-packed, it's one of the best-value UHF kits for touring.**

# FUELLED FOR ADVENTURE



## THIS BROWN DAVIS REPLACEMENT FUEL TANK FOR THE ISUZU D-MAX PROVIDES FREEDOM, FLEXIBILITY AND PEACE OF MIND IN THE BUSH

WORDS AND PHOTOS GLENN MARSHALL

When you start planning remote touring in Australia, one factor quickly rises above the rest – range. It doesn't matter how capable your rig is, how trick your suspension set-up might be, or how well-stocked your fridge is; if you can't carry enough fuel, you're limited in how far you can push into the outback.

That was the issue I faced with my Isuzu D-Max. The factory fuel tank holds 76 litres – fine if you're running around town or sticking to the highway between major centres. But when you're tackling long runs between servos, or deliberately bypassing them to avoid eye-watering prices, 76 litres just doesn't cut it.

That's why I fitted a Brown Davis 145-litre replacement tank. It's nearly double the standard capacity and has already proven its worth on long hauls and remote runs – including the challenging Canning Stock Route.

### BUSH PROVEN

There are plenty of companies in the aftermarket game, but few with the heritage of Brown Davis. Back in 1978, John Brown and David Davis began building custom fuel tanks for the motorsport world. These weren't standard tanks – they were engineered to take the punishment of high-speed racing, where safety and performance go hand in hand. When a tank fails on the track, the consequences aren't just inconvenient – they're dangerous.

That engineering DNA carried over as the company expanded into four-wheel drive touring and commercial vehicles. What began as a solution for race cars soon became a lifeline for outback travellers. Today, Brown Davis is still proudly Australian-owned and based in Bayswater in Melbourne. The company designs and manufactures its tanks locally, tailoring them to the conditions we face on our tracks.

The product range is impressive. Beyond the D-Max, Brown Davis builds long-range and replacement tanks for many nameplates including LandCruiser, HiLux, Ranger, Navara, Patros, BT-50, Prado and more. The company has also expanded into auxiliary tanks, bash plates, underbody protection and even vehicle accessories for mining and fleet operators.

That's the key point – Brown Davis isn't just making tanks for weekend warriors. Its gear is trusted by commercial fleets, government departments and emergency services, which says a lot about the confidence its products inspire.

### BUILT TOUGH

Part of what makes the Brown Davis replacement tank stand out is its construction. Each tank is made from cold-rolled 2mm aluminised steel, with a powder-coated exterior for extra durability. Inside, the design ensures fuel is delivered reliably, even in the toughest conditions.

A swirl pot ensures consistent pickup even when fuel is sloshing around over rough terrain or running low. Internal

The replacement tank allows for further exploration

baffles reduce surge and add strength to the tank. The Brown Davis tank also includes a drain bung, making it easy to empty or clean when required.

On the weight front, here's how things compare on a dual-cab ute (excluding fuel):

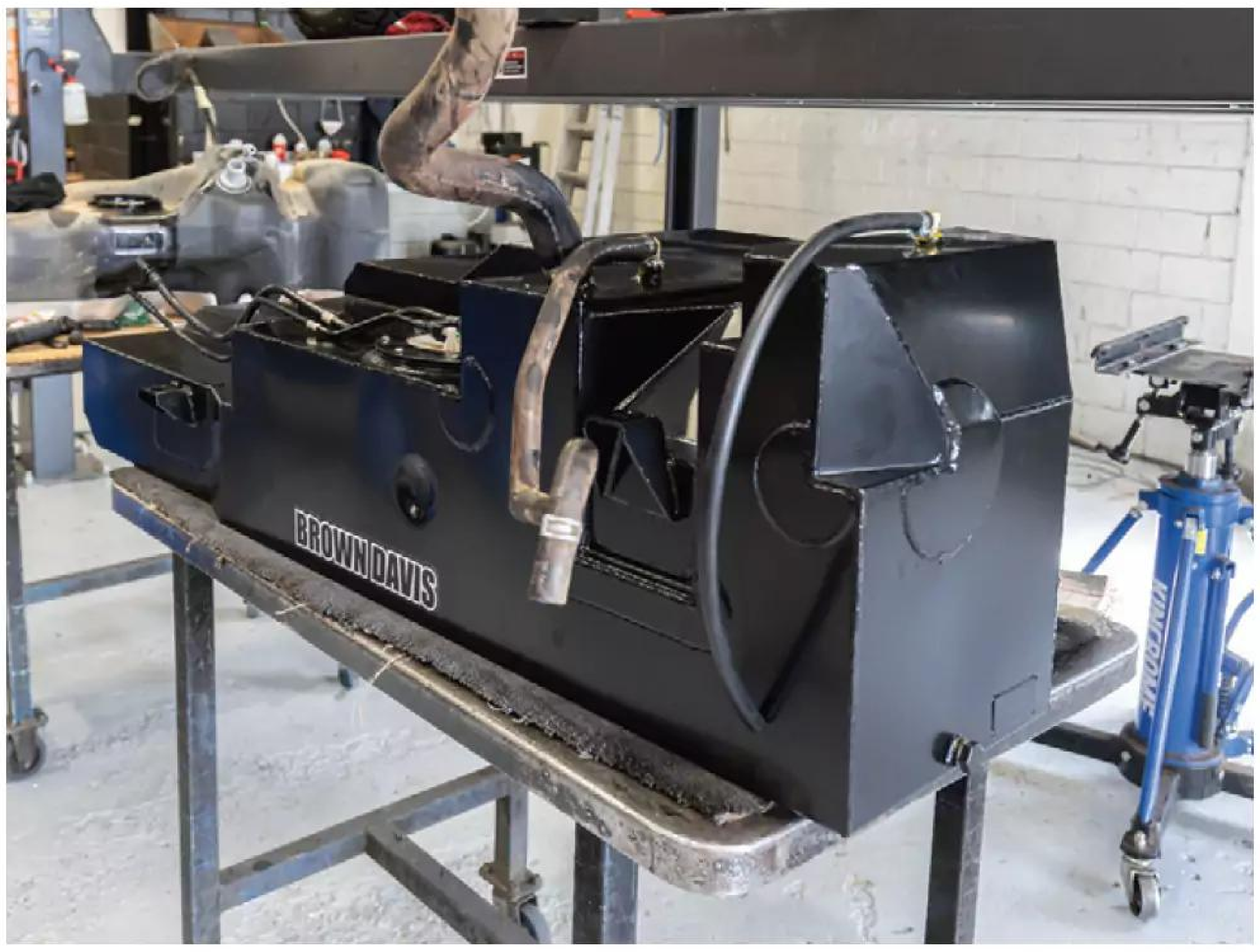
- Factory tank: 20-25kg
- Poly tank: 25-28kg
- Brown Davis steel tank: 45-50kg

The steel tank is heavier, but for me the added durability and features more than justify the extra kilos.

Another neat touch is that the factory fuel sender relocates directly into the Brown Davis tank. On some models a modified or replacement float arm is needed, but the system is designed so the vehicle's fuel gauge works as accurately as possible without rewiring the vehicle. Brown Davis also recommends resetting the odometer each time you fill up – after a couple of tanks, you'll know exactly what range to expect.

Every tank is stamped with a serial number, allowing Brown Davis to track when it was made and who it was sold to. That level of accountability is reassuring when you're investing serious money in a major touring upgrade.

**With the hoses fitted, its time for the installation**



## WHY A REPLACEMENT TANK?

When it came time to sort my fuel range, I only had one option with a tub on the D-Max – swap the factory tank for a larger replacement. I like the simplicity of a straight replacement: one filler, no extra switches or pumps, and no messing about transferring fuel between tanks. The Brown Davis replacement for the D-Max was the obvious choice – strong, simple and proven.

Jumping from 76 litres to 145 litres gave me the ability to travel further – but the real-world benefits go well beyond just extra kilometres.

### REAL BENEFITS OF THE UPGRADE

- **Freedom from expensive roadhouses:** Out in the bush, fuel prices can hit $3 per litre or more. With the extra capacity, I can plan refuels around cheaper stops rather than being forced to top up at the only bowser for hundreds of kilometres.
- **Less need for jerry cans:** I don't like carrying more than one jerry can if I can help it. They take up space, add weight in awkward spots and are never as safe or convenient as fuel stored in a proper tank. With 145 litres onboard, I only need a spare jerry as an absolute worst-case backup.
- **Peace of mind in the remote stuff:** On tracks like the Canning Stock Route, fuel range isn't negotiable. Having the bigger tank meant I could travel without constantly second-guessing how far the next stop was.
- **No compromise to clearance:** The tank tucks neatly beside the chassis with minimal overhang. Even crossing dunes, I never felt clearance was compromised.
- **Simple filling:** The tank uses the existing filler neck. There's no extra cap, no second hose, no confusing plumbing – just fill as normal.

## INSTALLATION

One of the key questions when choosing a replacement tank is how complex the installation will be. While Brown Davis designs its tanks as direct replacements for the factory unit, this isn't a simple bolt-in job you can knock over in the driveway on a Saturday morning.

The process involves safely draining and removing the original tank, relocating the factory fuel sender into the new unit, connecting all fuel and breather lines, and securing the replacement with the supplied brackets. In some cases the float arm on the sender unit needs to be modified or swapped for an alternative supplied by Brown Davis to ensure the gauge reads as accurately as possible. Once installed, the system doesn't require any wiring changes, as it uses all the factory connections.

I had my tank fitted by Brown Davis at its Bayswater facility in Melbourne. The company also has a wide network of authorised installers across Australia, including 4x4 workshops and mechanical specialists. These shops are experienced with fuel systems and can get the job done cleanly and safely.

Can you fit it yourself? Technically, yes – if you've got the gear, the know-how and the confidence to work around fuel lines. But for most people, it's best left to the professionals. Not only will you avoid the hassle of muscling a steel tank into place under a ute on jack stands, but you'll also have the peace of mind that the job's done correctly, safely and in line with warranty requirements.

It was money well spent. The whole process took only a couple of hours, and I drove away with the peace of mind that everything was fitted correctly, leak-free and ready for the long haul.

## LIFE WITH A BROWN DAVIS TANK

Of course, no modification is perfect. There are a couple of quirks to be aware of if you're considering this upgrade.

The biggest issue is that the factory distance-to-empty (DTE) function no longer works properly. With the larger tank, the ECU simply isn't calibrated to measure it correctly. The same goes for the average fuel-use display – it's not accurate.

On the Canning, I noticed the fuel needle dropping much quicker than expected. That set off alarm bells – the last thing you want is to be caught short out there. But when I worked out my usage on paper, it all checked out. I was averaging 18.4L/100km across the dunes, around 50 per cent more than my usual highway consumption. That might seem heavy, but it's exactly what you'd expect in that environment.

The other quirk is that when the low-fuel light comes on, there's still 30 to 40 litres left in the tank. That's a huge buffer, but it does take some mental adjustment. The temptation is to pull in and refill as soon as the light flicks on – but in reality, you've still got a long way to go.

So instead of relying on the dash, I go old-school – calculating consumption based on kilometres travelled and litres refilled. It's a habit you pick up quickly, and in a way it reconnects you with the vehicle in a way digital displays never could.

## REAL-WORLD PERFORMANCE

The Canning Stock Route was the ultimate test. Over nearly two weeks on the track I had to manage fuel carefully, knowing roadhouses and wells were few and far between.

The tank performed flawlessly. Despite heavy sand driving and carrying big loads, I still had plenty of fuel in reserve when I reached Kunawarritji – 730km from the last fuel stop at Billiluna. The peace of mind that comes with extra capacity can't be overstated, especially when you're travelling solo.

Even better, the tank didn't cause any clearance dramas. I was expecting at least a scrape or two over the dune crests, but the fitment proved tight and well thought out. No reduced departure angle, no nasty surprises.

On the highway runs before and after, the tank let me skip expensive fills at roadhouses and refuel where prices were lower. On one run I drove past three outback servos without stopping – simply because I didn't need to. That kind of freedom changes the way you plan your trips.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

For me, the Brown Davis 145-litre replacement tank has been one of the best upgrades I've made to the Isuzu D-Max. It hasn't just added kilometres to my range – it's added confidence to my travels.

When you're remote, the last thing you want is range anxiety. Knowing you've got that extra buffer changes everything. Whether it's skipping a $3 bowser, tackling long tracks or simply carrying less external fuel, the Brown Davis tank has proven its worth time and again.

Yes, you lose a few digital conveniences, but that's a small trade-off for the benefits. If you're serious about touring in Australia, a long-range replacement tank is one of the smartest investments you can make. And with Brown Davis' racing heritage and proven reliability, it's hard to look past its gear.

**Fitting the larger replacement tank provides a much longer range between drinks**

**At just 76L, the OEM tank isn't suitable for remote-area long-distance travel**

# Lovells at 95: Built for the ride of your life

## LOVELLS HAS BEEN KEEPING AUSTRALIA'S 4X4S AND CARAVANS RUNNING STRONG FOR 95 YEARS

In 1930, in a modest workshop in Homebush, Sydney, George Lovell began winding springs. Born from necessity during the Depression, the operation was humble in scale but uncompromising in principle: products would be built to a standard, never down to a price.

95 years on, Lovells has become one of Australia's most respected names in suspension, towing, and GVM and GCM upgrades. Its engineering supports applications ranging from family caravans and trade utes through to mining fleets and emergency service vehicles.

To mark its 95th year, Lovells has commenced construction of a $12 million flagship engineering and manufacturing centre in Newcastle. This facility will house state-of-the-art testing and design capabilities, from suspension fatigue testing to electric vehicle charging system development. Sustainability is also a core focus, with Lovells transitioning away from gas-powered processes in favour of induction heating technology to reduce emissions and improve efficiency.

The anniversary year also saw the launch of a flagship franchise in Osborne Park, Western Australia – the first to showcase Lovells' refreshed brand identity. Alongside this expansion came a significant regulatory achievement, with Lovells becoming the first manufacturer approved for post-registration Gross Combination Mass (GCM) revisions in Western Australia.

### BEYOND THE WORKSHOP

Community and culture remain central to the Lovells story. In 2025, the company once again supported the Royal Flying Doctor Service's 'Outback Car Trek' and 'Drive 4x4 the Doc', equipping vehicles vital to these fundraising events.

Motorsport also continues to play a key role in the brand's identity. Lovells has secured naming rights for the 2025 Alpine Rally of East Gippsland and welcomed AFL legend Brent 'Boomer' Harvey as a brand ambassador. Harvey now fronts *Full Travel*, a new content series designed to connect Lovells with the next generation of drivers – reinforcing the brand's commitment to performance and adventure.

To unify these milestones, Lovells has implemented the most comprehensive rebrand in its history – modernising its image while honouring its heritage. As Managing Director Simon Crane notes: "We're proud of what we've built over the last 95 years, but we're even more excited about what's next."

From its beginnings in Homebush to its current national and international footprint, Lovells' story is one of resilience, reinvention and commitment to quality. At 95, the company remains defined not only by the products it engineers, but by the trust it has built – and by its enduring promise: For the Ride of Your Life.

FROM THE OUTBACK TO THE HIGHWAY
LOVELLS
SUSPENSION UPGRADES
GVM UPGRADES
GCM UPGRADES
BTC UPGRADES
UPPER CONTROL ARMS
4000kg PLATINUM CVM UPGRADE
Ford Ranger NEXT-GEN
Weight Ratings
For the ride of your life
SETTING THE STANDARD

THIS MONTH WE TALK TO

# TERRAIN TAMER

## Describe your business

Terrain Tamer is a range of 4WD Parts, manufactured by Original Equipment Manufacturers to be stronger than the original or easier to instal as a kit or assembled unit.

Suspension, Brake, Filtration, Bearing Kits, Clutch, Driveline are all designed and manufactured to be stronger, safer, and last longer. Our Head Office in Melbourne is significant in size and holds over 60,000 lines on the shelf.

## Tell us some of the history of the company

Established in 1969, our parts were originally designed to help the tour operators who took tour groups into outback Australia using Bedford, Leyland and Land Rover vehicles. As they broke down, which was incredibly dangerous, they would come to see Frank, our founder, who would modify parts or source stronger parts from overseas. In the 1970s we moved into LandCruiser and HiLux vehicle applications, and now across the many popular 4WD applications such as Ford Ranger, Nissan Navara and Patrol, Isuzu D-MAX and Mazda BT-50. Gradually, part by part, 55 years later, Terrain Tamer is sought after all over the world for these innovations.

TERRAIN TAMER
HEAVY DUTY
BEARING KIT

## Where is the company now at

It has been an incredible journey, as we have taken our range to key markets globally over the last 40 years. Almost half our branches are now overseas in Europe, Africa, South America, NZ, PNG, Fiji, and we are very excited to now say North America.

The release of innovative parts has not slowed down, with over 2000 lines released in the last 12 months. Some of these have won innovation awards and some are relied on by Australia's largest companies, such as BHP.

## What is unique about your product

We would humbly suggest that Terrain Tamer is the only true 4WD parts specialist in the world. Not accessories like bullbars, but 4WD parts that run the vehicle. We say this because we control the design, the manufacture and the distribution of the Terrain Tamer range.

Then there is the incredibly important skill of Parts Interpreting that completes each transaction. All these key aspects have taken us 55 years to create and ultimately generate a very different customer experience, compared to a general parts trader, who simply buys and sells.

## If you could say two words about your product / service what would it be

Personally responsible.

## What makes you different from your competition

Our 4WD Test Track at Head Office symbolises our difference. No other company in the world has such a facility that we know of, which is a lot of fun and important to what we do and develop. It is part of the investment it takes to be the world leader, that the brand is today.

## What products are you developing now

We've got GVM Upgrade applications rolling out, and many applications for the USA market; plus some interesting heavy-duty radiators, upgraded brake solutions, fortified shock absorbers and parabolic spring applications.

## Who uses your products

Those who appreciate the difference.

## What is your greatest achievement

We're pretty proud of having 27 staff with over 25 years' service to the company. That is out of a team of 200.

The company has always looked to hire from within, rather than dropping outside managers into a leadership role. This takes time and some would say is limiting, but we have found it an incredibly enjoyable ride, as these people grow with the company.

"We grow through our people."

The Australian Automotive 4x4 market has a rich and proud heritage. For years local design, ingenuity and showcase and support truly Australian engineered and manufactured products. There are a few aussie manufacturers

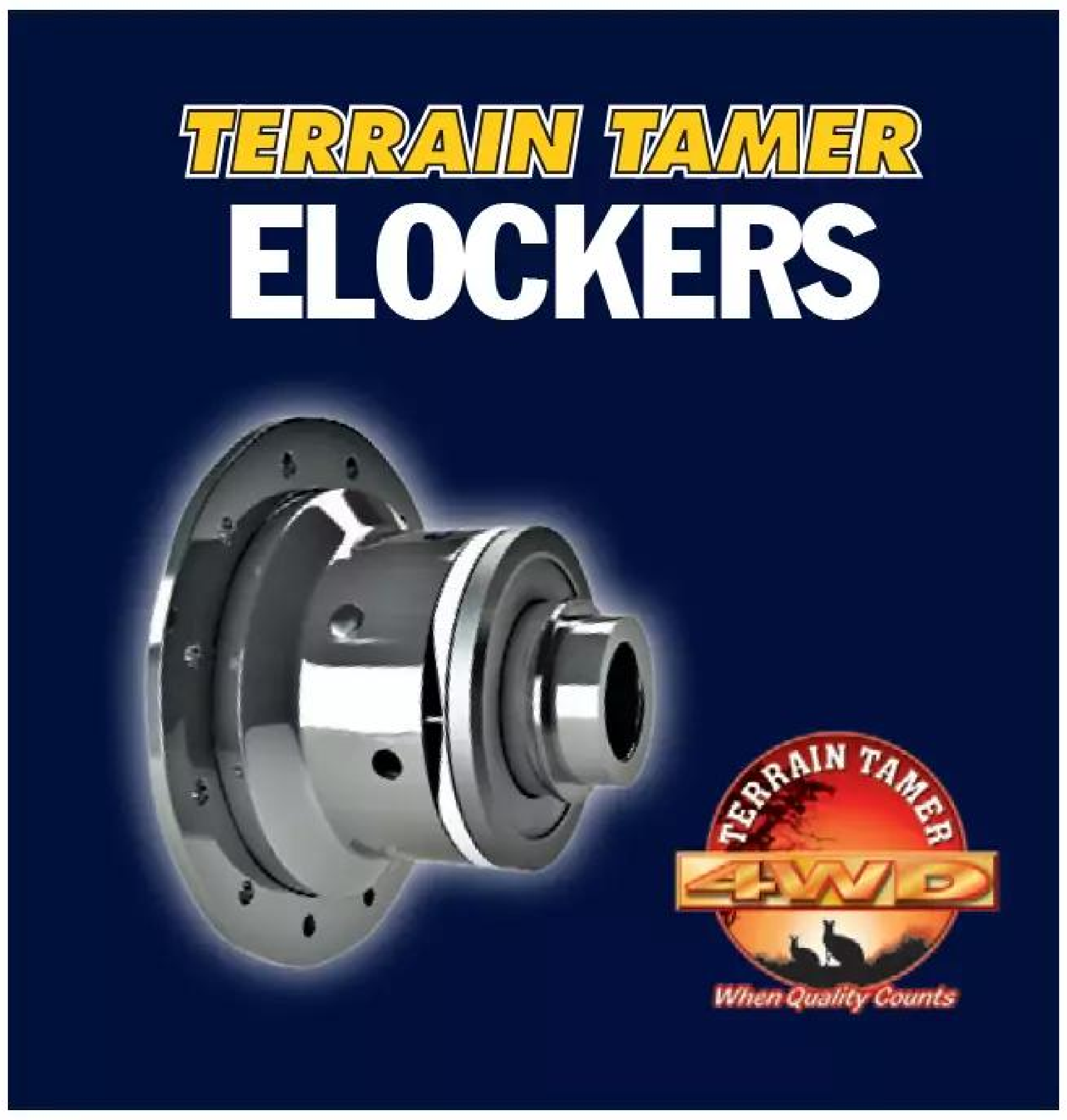
SO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL

TERRAIN TAMER
SEATS
AUSTRALIAN MADE FOR COMFORT
TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts

TERRAIN TAMER
SEAT BELT KITS
MADE IN AUSTRALIA
TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts

FLASHLUBE DIESEL CONDITIONER
flashlube.com
Genuine Flash Lube

TERRAIN TAMER
MOULDED FLOOR MATS
TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts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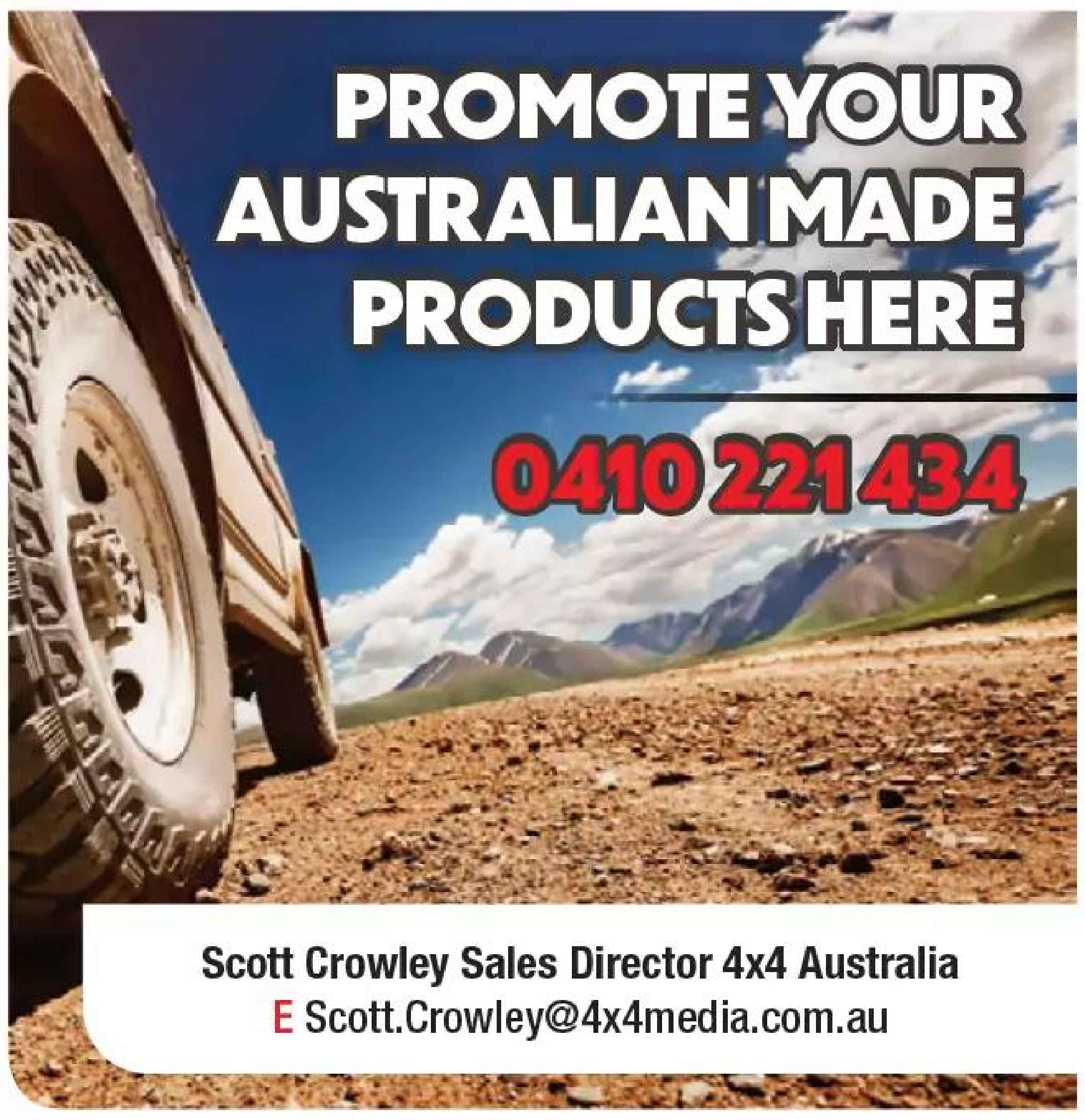
TERRAIN TAMER 4WD
When Quality Counts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manufacturing have created many fantastic four-wheel drive related products. At *4X4 Australia* we are proud to keeping the dream alive, helping to keep the local manufacturing industry thriving and keeping people in real jobs.

**AUSSIE-MADE PRODUCTS.**

# GEAR

## PRODUCT TESTS & NEW STUFF

LOVELLS
Platinum Series

### LOVELLS GVM UPGRADE FOR RAM DT 1500

Lovells now offers GVM upgrades for the RAM DT 1500 Bighorn and Laramie, increasing GVM by 250-500kg and GCM by up to 237kg. The Comfort kit uses heavy-duty coil springs with twin-tube Gas Legend shocks, Touring adds twin-tube shocks, and Platinum features adjustable monotube remote reservoir shocks. All upgrades are locally tested, certified and compliant with both federal and state regulations. Upgraded GCM reaches 7950kg (state-dependent), with axle ratings of 1820kg front and 2130kg rear. OEM GVM is 3450kg, with upgraded GVM ranging from 3700kg to 3950kg.

**RRP: $3550 (Comfort); $4650 (Touring); $5800 (Platinum)**

**WEBSITE: lovells.com.au**

### ARIZON 4X4 OFF-GRID G.R.I.T. AND A.X.I.S. POWER CONTROL SYSTEMS

The Arizon 4X4 G.R.I.T. and A.X.I.S. are slimline, slide-out 12V power control systems designed for canopies and suitable for new installations or retrofits. Built in Melbourne, the G.R.I.T. system uses a 300Ah lithium battery and the A.X.I.S. system a 460Ah Arizon NEXUS lithium battery. Both systems include Victron Energy DC-DC chargers, MPPT solar regulators, MultiPlus inverter chargers, smart battery monitors, GX touchscreen, and multiple 12V, USB-C and Anderson connections, along with double GPO, RCD, and 8-gang switch panel with app control. Optional Victron GX LTE 4G module enables remote monitoring and GPS tracking. Weighing 70kg (G.R.I.T.) and 95kg (A.X.I.S.), they provide portable, off-grid power for tradies and four-wheel drivers.

**RRP: POA**

**WEBSITE: arizon.com.au/product-category/4wd-canopy-systems/**

ARIZON4X4
A.X.I.S.
ARIZON4X4

## DULUX AUTOMOTIVE SPRAY RANGE

Dulux has introduced a new spray paint range that includes 37 colours, eight chalky finishes and 13 decorative effects. A soft-touch applicator makes spraying easier and allows for a smoother, more even finish. The new range also features Dulux AutoShield, a spray paint formulated specifically for automotive use, and the Dulux Marking Range, designed for both permanent line marking and temporary survey marking. The full range is available through all Dulux retail and trade outlets.

**RRP: From $15.30**

**WEBSITE: www.dulux.com.au/paint/spray/**

## MILWAUKEE 2000A JUMP STARTER

The Milwaukee M18JS2000-0 jump starter delivers 2000A cranking power for petrol and diesel utes, vans, light commercial trucks and heavy machinery. Powered by the M18 battery platform, it offers true cordless portability, zero sparks technology with reverse polarity protection, and integrated LED flood and red hazard lights for safety. Built for all-weather Australian conditions, it seamlessly integrates with Milwaukee's M18 ecosystem, supporting more than 250 tools on a single battery platform.

**RRP: Approx. $400**

**WEBSITE: www.milwaukeetool.com.au**

## NIGHT HAWK ADV DRIVING LIGHTS

The Night Hawk ADV driving lights are engineered for off-road use. Featuring a multi-LED and reflector design, the 7-inch model has 23 LEDs and the 9-inch model 27 LEDs, claimed to produce a clean 5700K natural white light for excellent reach and spread. Built with a high-impact polycarbonate lens and robust die-cast aluminium housing with UV-stabilised powder coat, they are engineered to resist off-road punishment. Each light includes three protective covers, plug-and-play wiring harnesses and a secure mounting system. IP68 and IP69K rated, Australian tested, and designed with voltage and thermal protection for reliable, long-lasting performance.

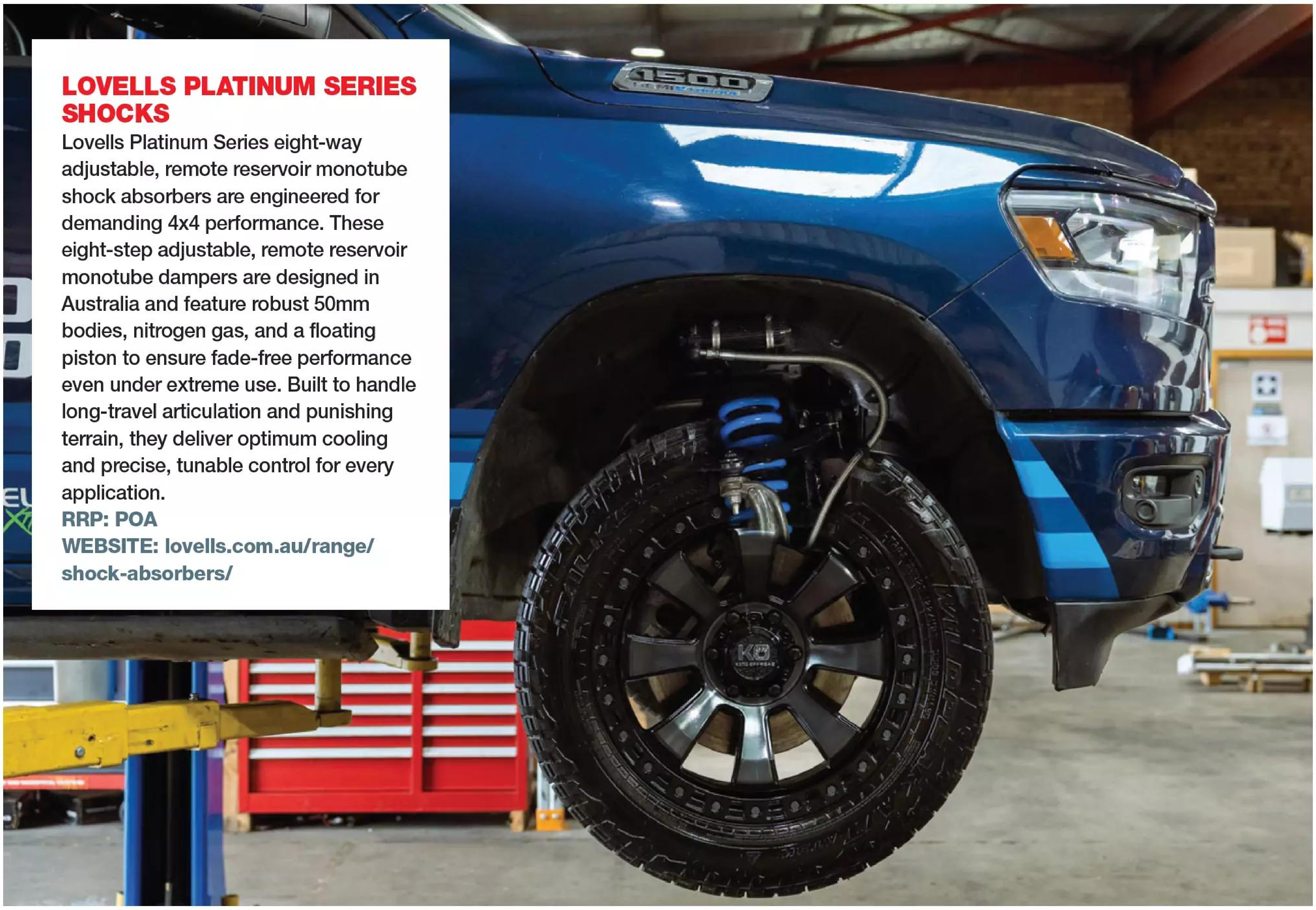
**RRP: $550 (7-inch); $650 (9-inch)**
**WEBSITE: bushranger.com.au**

## CUSTOM LITHIUM NEXT GENERATION ULTRA SLIM LITHIUM BATTERY 400AH

This Next Generation Ultra Slim Lithium Battery delivers high-performance and reliable power in a compact, lightweight design. The battery is equipped with premium A-grade automotive LiFePO4 cells, an inbuilt Heltech BMS with active balancer, and protection against overheating, over-discharge and short circuits. Australian made in Brisbane, each battery is bench tested, housed in a lightweight aluminium enclosure, and backed by a seven-year warranty.

**RRP: $4080**
**WEBSITE: customlithium.com.au**

ULTRA SLIM V3
customLITHIUM
LiFePO4 12.8V BATTERY
www.customlithium.com.au
CAUTION



## LOVELLS PLATINUM SERIES SHOCKS

Lovells Platinum Series eight-way adjustable, remote reservoir monotube shock absorbers are engineered for demanding 4x4 performance. These eight-step adjustable, remote reservoir monotube dampers are designed in Australia and feature robust 50mm bodies, nitrogen gas, and a floating piston to ensure fade-free performance even under extreme use. Built to handle long-travel articulation and punishing terrain, they deliver optimum cooling and precise, tunable control for every application.

**RRP: POA**

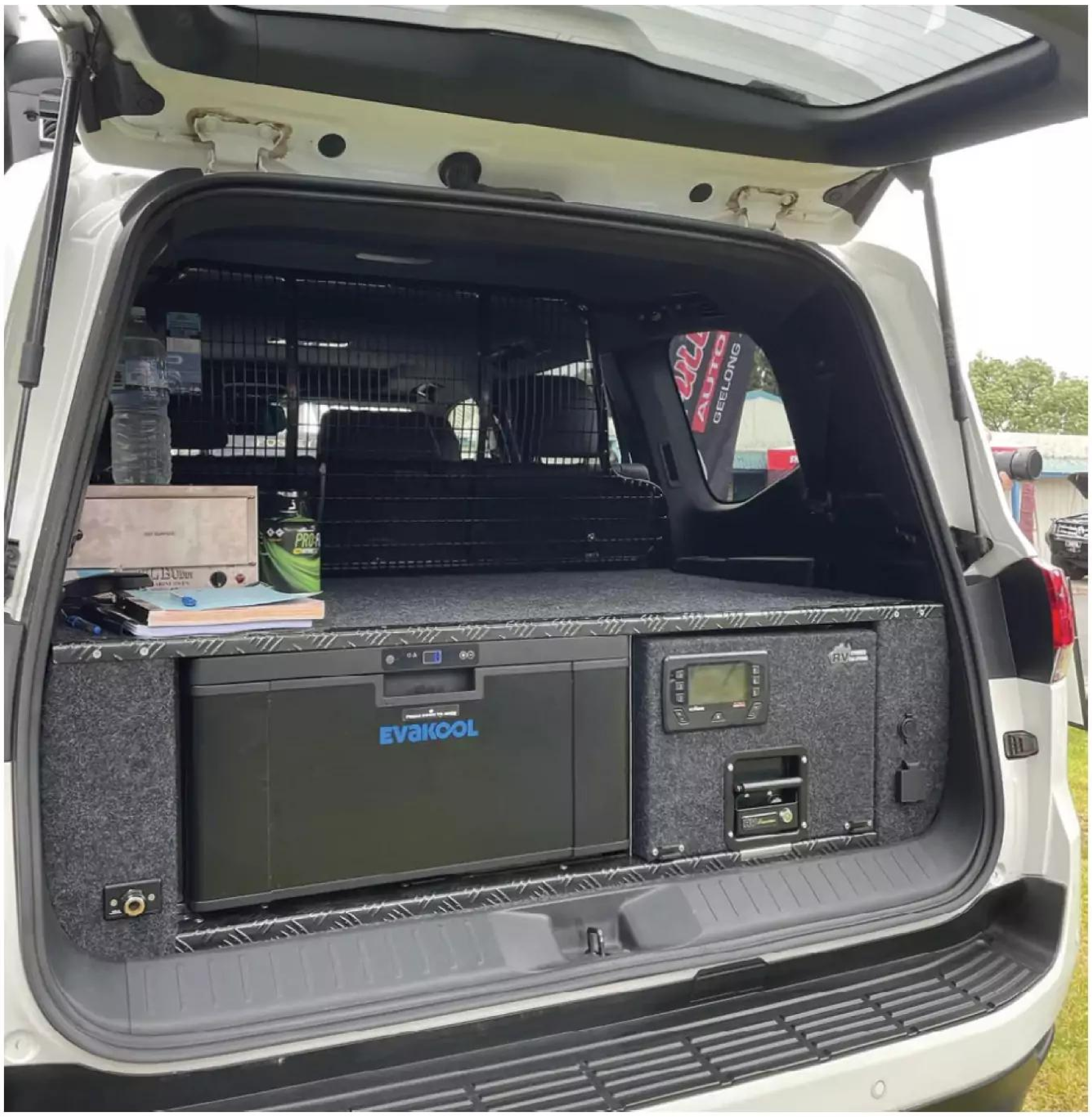
**WEBSITE: lovells.com.au/range/shock-absorbers/**

## TOURING SOLUTIONS AUSTRALIA NISSAN PATROL Y62 APEX 2-INCH LIFT KIT

The Touring Solutions Australia's Apex 2-inch Lift Kit for the Nissan Patrol Y62 combines strength, clearance and load support for touring and off-road use. The package includes Blackhawk upper control arms, EFS front and rear coil springs – rated +150kg with +40mm lift – along with Apex lower control arms, a full bush and bolt kit, and an Airbag Man air suspension helper kit for added stability under load.

**RRP: $8900**

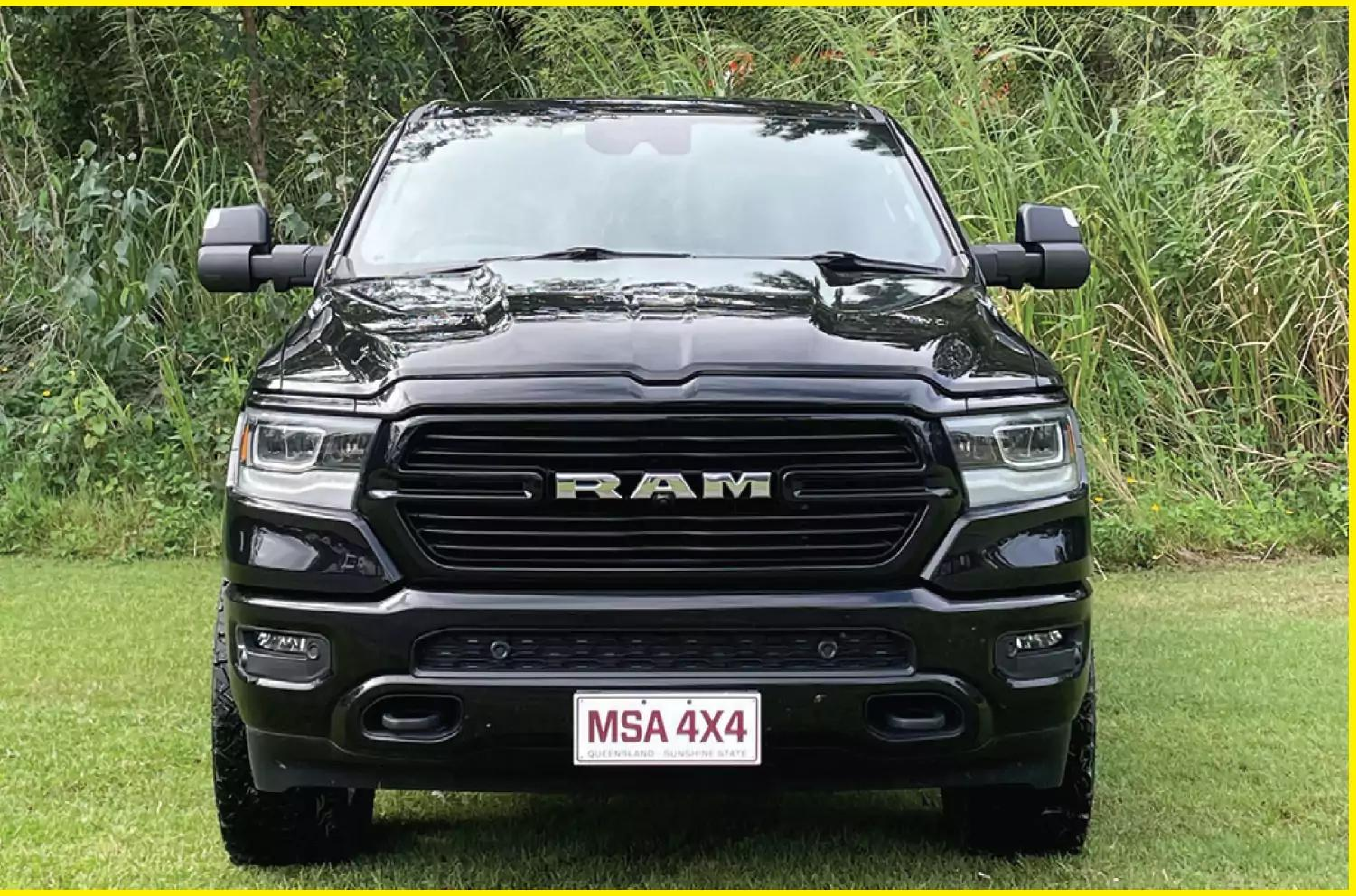
**WEBSITE: www.touringsolutionsaustralia.com.au**



## EVAKOOL 40L PLATINUM DRAWER FRIDGE FREEZER

The EvaKool 40L Platinum Drawer Fridge Freezer is a true 40L drawer designed for use in 4x4s, canopies and campers, delivering reliable cooling for Australian adventures. Equipped with a Secop compressor, LED interior lighting, and a clear acrylic lid, it offers a temperature range from -16°C to 10°C and a 48-can capacity. The single-drawer design is easy to remove and clean, with a compact, fully insulated metal cabinet requiring no additional fridge slide. Controlled via an easy-to-read LED panel, it includes a heavy-duty floor plate bracket with a locking mechanism for secure installation. Made in Australia to withstand harsh conditions.

**RRP: $1399**
**WEBSITE: evakool.com.au**



## MSA POWER FOLD TOWING MIRRORS FOR RAM 1500 DT

MSA Power Fold towing mirrors provide enhanced visibility for the RAM 1500 DT with a large single-lens mirror, four driving positions, and vertical and horizontal adjustment that remains stable on rough terrain. The mirrors fold in or out at the press of a button – ideal for tight tracks. Features include electric adjustment, heating, indicators, puddle lights, temperature sensor and a unique pivot design. Built with injection-moulded and die-cast aluminium components, they are ADR compliant and come with a five-year warranty.

**RRP: $1735**
**WEBSITE: msa4x4.com.au**

## YAKIMA STAGETWO HITCH RACK

The Yakima StageTwo hitch rack is a heavy-duty bike carrier designed for heavier units. It carries two bikes, expandable to four with the StageTwo +2 add-on, supporting on-road and RV loads up to 31.75kg per bike and off-road up to 19kg per bike. The rack features tiered, adjustable Stadium Seating trays, 40mm extra clearance behind open tailgates, a smooth tilt mechanism, and a folding design for storage. Security includes StrongArm wheel hooks, integrated SKS locks, and a lock loop. Weighing 28kg, it is compatible with RampUp accessories (sold separately).

**RRP: $1299 (StageTwo); $899 (StageTwo +2 add-on); $159 (RampUp)**

**WEBSITE: www.yakima.com.au**

## XSPEC LARGE PANTRY BOX

The XSPEC Large Pantry Box adds 55 litres of storage to your vehicle and mounts on either side of an Ineos Grenadier using the XSPEC window utility frame (sold separately). Built from powder-coated aluminium, it includes a lockable lid, an internal aluminium shelf for multi-level storage and mounting hardware. Available with a lift-up lid or fold-down door that doubles as a table, it is approved for use with standard Grenadier mirrors.

**RRP: $1699**

**WEBSITE: expeditionhq.com.au**

# READERS RIGS

WANT TO SEE YOUR 4X4 PUBLISHED IN THE MAG? SEND US A PIC VIA OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

**SIMON FAULKNER**

## 2012 NISSAN NAVARA

I'm running a 2012 D40 Navara ST-X 550 with the retuned 3.0L V6 diesel. It's got a three-inch turbo-back exhaust with a crisp V6 rumble, TC Boxes tray and canopy setup, 3.5-inch Superior remote-res lift, and a fresh set of 33-inch Kenda Klever KR601s.

The best spot so far would have to be the Old Tele Track – the Nav really surprised me there, especially coming from a background of Patrols and old Land Rovers. I even managed to pull out two Patrols on that trip.

**LIAM DOSS**

## 2013 NISSAN NAVARA

Mods include a TJM bull bar, Falken Wildpeak A/T tyres, and a Kings tub rack and rooftop tent. My favourite place I have taken it would be Rules Beach in Queensland.

**ADAM PERRIER**

## 2023 INEOS GRENADIER

Pictured on 5 Beaches Track on the Ineos 4x4 Club Qld's first Cape York trip. We towed a 3.5t van to the Tip and back!

Mods include a 4.0t GVM upgrade with airbags, GrenX Grenadier snorkel, 17-inch Method wheels, 285/70R17 Maxxis Razr MTs, Euro Flo rack with side fuel/MaxTrax carrier, Black Sheep light bar, rooftop boxes with 80W solar, Victron auxiliary battery, Expedition HQ electric steps, ARB twin brushless compressor and a Darche 270 awning.

**GRANT WEBB**

# 1984 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER HJ47

It's a 1984 HJF47 with a 12HT and five-speed conversion. It hasn't been back on the road for long, but the first road trip was 2500km with no dramas.

**NIGEL BRUCE**

# 2024 TOYOTA HILUX SR5

I'm located in New Zealand. This picture is crossing the Mackley River below the Denniston Plateau. Mods include an EFS lift, Ironman 4x4 bull bar, and an OzRoo tub rack with a Feldon Shelter rooftop tent and Darche 270 awning.

**DAVE CHARLTON**

# 2020 GXL

It has a TJM T13 Outback bar with winch and light bar; Stedi rock light on the upper tailgate; Ironman 4t GVM upgrade with Foam Cell Pro shocks, diff drop and Blackhawk upper control arms; Brown Davis bash plates; and ROH Hammer rims with Maxxis RAZR ATs 28/70R17s. A.

It also has Razorback seat covers, shovel holder, MSA mirrors, diff breathers, dual-battery system with REDARC DC charger, iTech Lithium, solar, Uniden UHF, fridge, Travel Buddy, Rhino rack, Armax snorkel, Donaldson airbox and Flashlube catch can.

The Vic High Country is our local playground, the most memorable trip being Billy Goat's Bluff Track and Blue Rag via Ritchie's Track. We've also hit the Limestone Coast, Lake Eyre and outback Queensland. Arnhem Land and across the Gulf to the top end are next. That's slowly filling in the lines across this amazing country of ours. Still have your Aussie map from the mag from years ago!

# READERS RIGS

**DECLAN WOOD**

## 2023 FORD RANGER SPORT

### A FAMILIAR RANGER FINDS IT WAY BACK TO THE PAGES OF *4X4 AUSTRALIA*

My passion for four-wheel driving kicked off in my early 20s when I bought a 2015 MQ Triton. Over four years I built it up bit by bit, spent countless weekends exploring, and learned the hard way that mud equals money. Back then I just wanted to drive everything – and probably ended up spending the same amount on repairs as I paid for the ute!

The biggest hit came after an awesome two-week trip around NSW. We headed up to Lightning Ridge, followed the Murray-Darling, then spent a couple of days at Kosciuszko before heading back to Sydney. While out on the Murray-Darling track, I was cleaning my air filters every few days. Unfortunately, at some point a small rock must have made its way past the filter.

When I got home and took the Triton in for a service, the mechanic found metal in the oil. Further investigation revealed the turbo blades looked like serrated knives – metal had gone right through the engine. The only option was a full engine replacement.

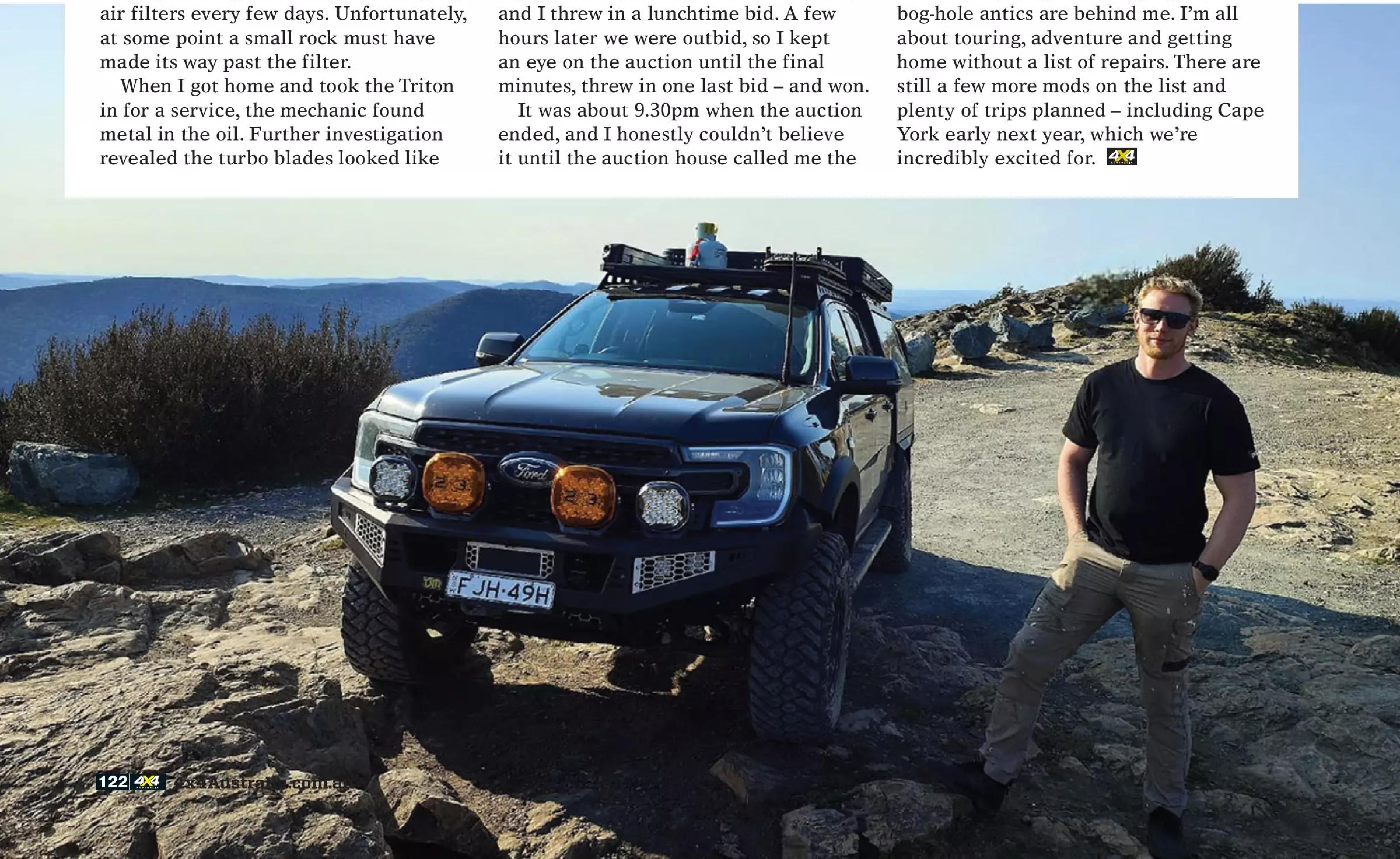
Not long after, I made the tough call to sell the Triton. For a couple of years, I was without a 4x4 – the responsible part of me focused on buying an apartment and avoiding the never-ending repair bills. But I missed it. I missed being able to get out of the city and explore those off-the-beaten-track places.

Then, around the middle of last year, everything changed. I was having lunch when I saw a post on Facebook – it was the final day to bid on *4X4 Australia's* Ford Ranger demo car. I had a chat with my girlfriend, we set a maximum price, and I threw in a lunchtime bid. A few hours later we were outbid, so I kept an eye on the auction until the final minutes, threw in one last bid – and won.

It was about 9.30pm when the auction ended, and I honestly couldn't believe it until the auction house called me the next morning to confirm. I was over the moon. The Ranger was in Melbourne, so my girlfriend and I jumped on a flight, caught up with some friends, and the next morning picked it up and drove it back to Sydney.

Since then, we've added a couple of extra mods to make it our own – and we haven't wasted a single free weekend. Over Christmas and New Year, we took it on its first big adventure: a week-and-a-half touring the Great Ocean Road and heading across to Adelaide. The Ranger was flawless – far more comfortable than the old Triton – and clearly built by *4X4 Australia* with touring in mind.

These days, my rock-hopping and bog-hole antics are behind me. I'm all about touring, adventure and getting home without a list of repairs. There are still a few more mods on the list and plenty of trips planned – including Cape York early next year, which we're incredibly excited for.



SC-V-USB-01

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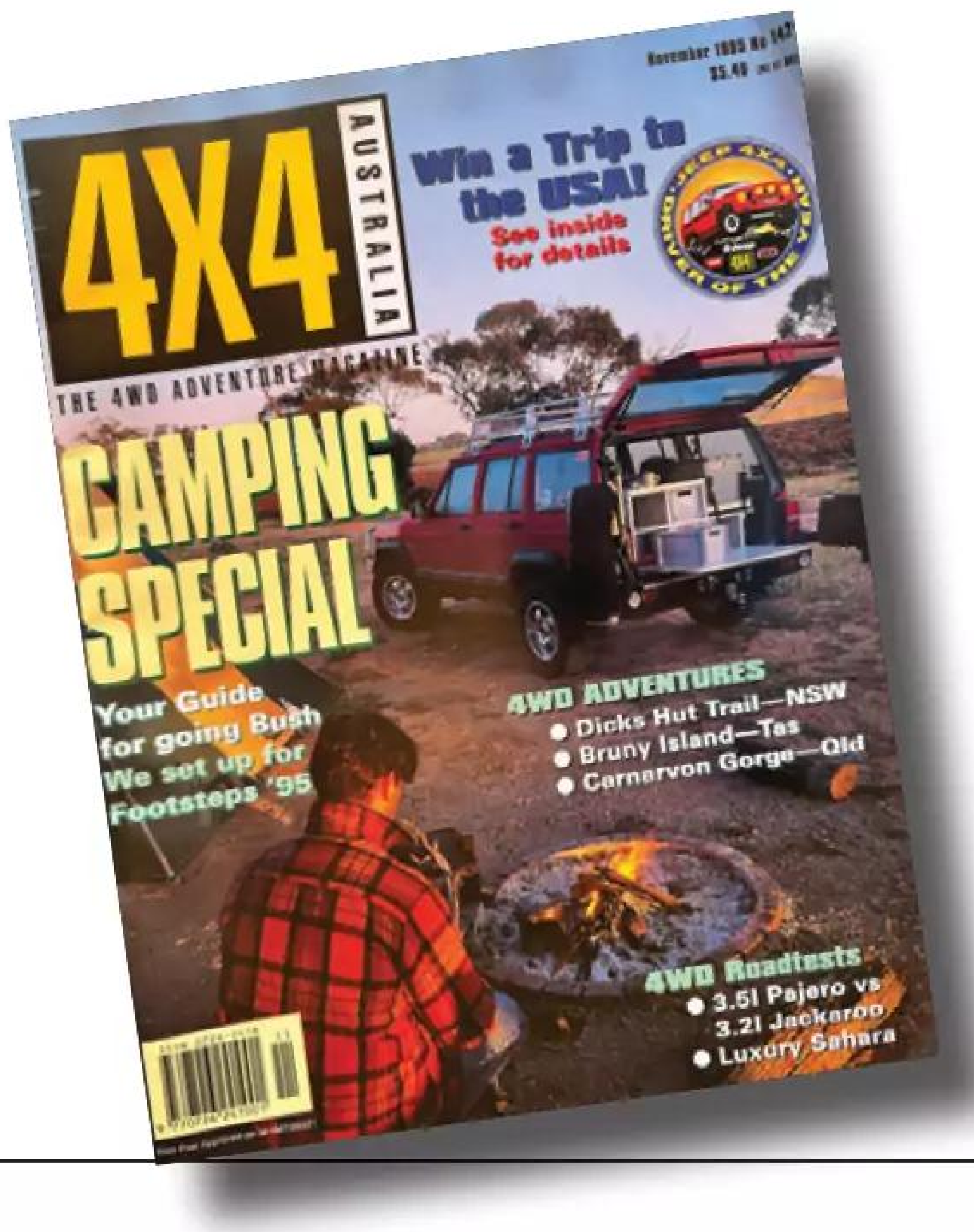
# THE SCORE

THE ESSENTIAL NUMBERS AND PRICES OF EVERY 4X4 ON SALE IN AUSTRALIA

# REAR VIEW

***4X4 AUSTRALIA* LOOKS BACK AT THE CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY, THE RISE IN OUTBACK TOURING, THE EVOLUTIONARY SOPHISTICATION OF 4X4S AND MORE…**



## 30 YEARS AGO – NOVEMBER 1995

In this issue we gave readers a chance to enter a unique competition where selected competitors from each state would all be driving the same vehicle – a Jeep Cherokee Sport – in a series of tough off-road stages set in the Victorian High Country. The winner's prize was a trip to the USA to enjoy the Jeepers Jamboree in Oregon. Not a bad prize, eh!

Sticking with the vehicle theme, we tested a turbo-diesel Toyota LandCruiser and compared a Holden Jackaroo with a Mitsubishi Pajero, the latter being deemed the preferred vehicle in at the end of the exhaustive comparison.

As the front cover proclaimed, our big equipment survey for the November 1995 issue was on camping gear, and we covered everything from tents and swags to stoves and fridges. Looking back, I get the feeling we favoured a simpler choice of camping goodies in those days.

For an idea of where to go with all your new camping gear, our writers took you to Bruny Island in Tassie, Carnarvon Gorge in Queensland and along the Dicks Hut Trail in NSW – all places we'd still enjoy today.

---

4X4 AUSTRALIA
SUPER TRUCKS IN TOWN!
WIN!
CAPE CRUSADERS
Extreme off-roading to the top of Oz!
PLUS BONUS 16-PAGE QUEENSLAND OUTBACK GUIDE

## 20 YEARS AGO – NOVEMBER 2005

This issue saw the start of our Cape York – East to West and Back Again Expedition. It started poorly, with our cross-country stage defeating us just a few hours in. Things looked up after that, and it proved to be a great trip – one we'd love to do again today.

Keeping with the expedition theme, the then Editor of the magazine, Dean Mellor, and a group of experienced desert travellers joined forces for a jaunt across the Madigan Line. Back then there was no established trail and it was, in effect, a cross-country journey. What an adventure!

In addition, there was a guide to Outback Queensland and stories on Craig's Hut in Victoria and the Gloucester – Barrington Tops region of NSW, making it an adventure-packed issue.

We also tested to destruction a few of the well-known and favoured snatch straps available on the market back then, with some very surprising results.

We also checked out the latest in electronic tuning enhancements with the Tunit plug-in power upgrade.

It wouldn't be a 4x4 magazine without some vehicle tests, and this month we covered everything from the Mercedes M-Class to the Jeep Grand Cherokee TDV6, with a few less capable vehicles thrown into the mix.

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4X4
VWs CONQUER THE CAPE
BACK IN BLACK
HELL-LUX
MURDERED-OUT HILUX WAKES THE DEAD

## 10 YEARS AGO – NOVEMBER 2015

A worked-over, impressive-looking and utterly capable HiLux graced the front cover of this issue and it was subjected to a tough test to prove just how good it was.

We also drove the new Toyota Prado, as well as the Isuzu MU-X and D-Max, but the most impressive vehicle-based story was when a group of 13 blokes took three standard Volkswagen Amaroks to the Cape in what can only be described as a torture test – for the vehicles, not the drivers!

With travelling on our mind, this issue went to Skytrek in South Australia, visited Stradbroke Island in Queensland and explored the remote and rarely visited Olary Ranges in eastern South Australia.

For those with modifications and accessories on their wish list, we looked at the Unichip Q4, a Magnuson supercharger and a Pedders suspension kit for your next outback foray.

# RANGER RETAKES 4X4 CROWN AND CHINESE BRANDS SURGE INTO THE TOP 10

The Ford Ranger has reclaimed the top spot in Australia's 4x4 sales race, outselling the Toyota HiLux in August, 4730 sales to 3958.

It capped a strong month for Ford, with the Everest also taking honours as the best-performing 4x4 wagon. The seven-seat off-roader posted 2203 sales, outselling the Toyota Prado (2033) and finishing behind only the Ranger and HiLux on the 4x4 charts.

At the top end of the ute market, Chevrolet's Silverado led the American pickups with 310 sales – including 151 of the heavy-duty HD variant – ahead of the RAM 1500 (221) and theToyota Tundra, which managed just 74.

Across the broader market, Australians bought 100,539 new vehicles in August, the second-strongest result ever for the month. Chinese brands continued their rapid rise, with BYD, GWM, MG and Chery all breaking into the national top 10 for the first time. BYD's Shark recorded 1261 sales for the month, lifting its year-to-date total to 12,918.

"The presence of four Chinese brands in the top 10 illustrates the continuing evolution of the automotive landscape in Australia. Consumers have an extraordinary range of vehicles to choose from – more than 400 models, including around 100 EVs," said Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries chief executive, Tony Weber.

Toyota still leads overall with 20,791 deliveries in August, followed by Ford (8002), Kia (7402), Mazda (6814) and Hyundai (6322). SUVs dominated the market with 60,495 sales (60 per cent share), while passenger cars made up just 13.1 per cent and continue to track 25 per cent lower year-to-date than in 2024. The LCV market lifted by 704 sales (+3.1 per cent)

A total of 18,529 4x4 utes were sold in August, up 10.5 per cent on the same month last year. That brings the year-to-date tally to 143,985 sales – an increase of 2.1 per cent. Diesel ute sales dipped slightly (1.4 per cent), while petrol variants fell sharply (26.4 per cent).

The top-selling overall models (4x4 and 4x2) for the month were the Ford Ranger (4942), Toyota HiLux (4823), Toyota RAV4 (4115), MG ZS (2680) and Isuzu D-MAX (2314). Also in the top 10 were the Ford Everest (2203), Toyota LandCruiser (2117) and Toyota Prado (2033).

## JUST THE FACTS

**Top-selling 4x4s in August 2025**
**Source: VFACTS**

| VEHICLE | UNITS |
|---|---|
| 1. Ford Ranger | 4730 |
| 2. Toyota HiLux | 3958 |
| 3. Ford Everest | 2203 |
| 4. Toyota Prado | 2033 |
| 5. Isuzu D- MAX | 1959 |
| 6. BYD Shark | 1261 |
| 7. Mitsubishi Triton | 1260 |
| 8. Toyota LandCruiser 300 | 1208 |
| =9. Isuzu MU-X | 909 |
| =9. Toyota LC79 | 909 |
| 10. Mazda BT-50 | 880 |

**Top-selling 4x4s year-to-date to August 2025**
**Source: VFACTS**

| VEHICLE | UNITS |
|---|---|
| 1. Ford Ranger | 35,097 |
| 2. Toyota HiLux | 30,203 |
| 3. Toyota Prado | 19,955 |
| 4. Ford Everest | 16,922 |
| 5. Isuzu D-MAX | 14,733 |
| 6. BYD Shark | 12,918 |
| 7. Mitsubishi Triton | 10,799 |
| 8. Isuzu MU-X | 10,362 |
| 9. Mazda BT-50 | 8011 |
| 10. Toyota LandCruiser 300 | 7722 |

## FORD 5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

### RANGER

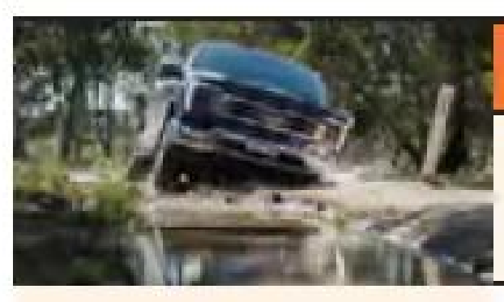
The next-gen Ranger took the best-seller crown away from HiLux in 2023. Full-time 4x4 is offered on all V6 models and the 2.0TD Wildtrak X. There is a price hike across the range this month.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single XL C/C | 48,230 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 1903 | 1327 | 3500 | 80 |
| Super XL C/C | 50,730 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2007 | 1223 | 3500 | 80 |
| Super XL P/U | 52,380 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2167 | 1063 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL C/C | 49,230 | SiT4/2.0 | A6 | 405 | 125 | 2046 | 1144 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL C/C | 51,780 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2072 | 1158 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL P/U | 51,130 | SiT4/2.0 | A6 | 405 | 125 | 2190 | 1000 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL P/U | 53,680 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2216 | 1014 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLS P/U | 57,880 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2216 | 1014 | 3500 | 80 |
| Super XLT P/U | 61,890 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2178 | 1052 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT P/U | 63,390 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2225 | 1005 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT C/C | 67,190 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2129 | 1151 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT P/U | 63,890 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2217 | 1015 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT P/U | 69,090 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2285 | 995 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl XLT P/U H | 71,990 | T4/2.3PHEV | A10 | 697 | 207 | 2527 | 830 | 3500 | 70 |
| Double Sport P/U | 66,390 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2242 | 988 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double Sport P/U | 71,340 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2300 | 980 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double Sport P/U | 75,990 | T4/2.3PHEV | A10 | 697 | 207 | 2566 | 805 | 3500 | 70 |
| Dbl Wildtrak P/U | 69,890 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2295 | 985 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Tremor P/U | 69,690 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2419 | 901 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Wildtrak P/U | 75,090 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2353 | 997 | 3500 | 80 |
| Db Wildtrak P/U | 79,990 | T4/2.3PHEV | A10 | 697 | 207 | 2615 | 795 | 3500 | 70 |
| Dbl Wildtrak X P/U | 77,640 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2432 | 918 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Platinum P/U | 80,890 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| Single S/Duty C/C | 82,990 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 154 | N/A | 1982 | 4500 | 80 |
| Super S/Duty C/C | 86,490 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 154 | N/A | 1896 | 4500 | 80 |
| Dbl Stormtrak P/U | 86,990 | T4/2.3PHEV | A10 | 697 | 207 | 2692 | 795 | 3500 | 70 |
| Dbl S/Duty C/C | 89,990 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 697 | 154 | N/A | 1825 | 4500 | 80 |
| Dbl Raptor P/U | 90,690 | V6P/3.0 | A10 | 583 | 292 | 2431 | 753 | 2500 | 80 |

### EVEREST

Everest's four variants are joined by two more – the Wildtrak and Tremor – sitting between Sport and Platinum and available with the 3.0-litre TDV6 donk. There's also a price increase for this month.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ambiente | 59,440 | L4TD/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2367 | 733 | 3500 | 80 |
| Trend | 67,290 | L4TD/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2383 | 717 | 3500 | 80 |
| Sport | 75,990 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2454 | 696 | 3500 | 80 |
| Tremor | 78,440 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| Wildtrak | 76,950 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2488 | 662 | 3500 | 80 |
| Platinum | 82,990 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2492 | 658 | 3500 | 80 |



### F150

Ford Australia has brought the F150 back to our shores with two models available in two wheelbases. The long wheelbase adds $995 to the price and also gets you a longer cargo bed.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| XLT (SWB) | 106,950 | V6TP/3.5 | A10 | 678 | 298 | 2451 | 769 | 4500 | 136 |
| XLT (LWB) | 107,945 | V6TP/3.5 | A10 | 678 | 298 | N/A | N/A | 4500 | 136 |
| Lariat (SWB) | 139,950 | V6TP/3.5 | A10 | 678 | 298 | 2555 | 710 | 4500 | 136 |
| Lariat (LWB) | 140,945 | V6TP/3.5 | A10 | 678 | 298 | N/A | N/A | 4500 | 136 |

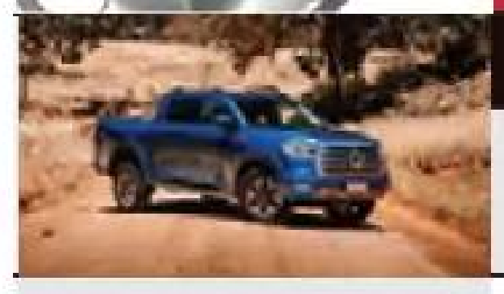
## BYD 5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

### SHARK6

Build Your Dreams first entry to the Australian market is the Shark double0cab ute and it comes with a hybrid EV powertrain and a preper 4x4 system

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shark 6 Premium | 57,900 | T4PHEV/1.5 | CVT | 650 | 321 | 2710 | 790 | 2500 | 60 |

## GWM 7-year/unlimited km **www.gmwute.com.au**



### UTE

GWM's next-gen Cannon features a more grunty 2.4-litre turbo-diesel four-cylinder donk (replacing the previous-gen 2.0TD) , backed by a nine-speed auto gearbox. It also has a higher braked towing capacity.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lux | 40,490* | L4TD/2.4 | A9 | 480 | 135 | 2230 | 995 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultra | 43,490* | L4TD/2.4 | A9 | 480 | 135 | 2230 | 995 | 3500 | 75 |
| Vanta | 45,490* | L4TD/2.4 | A9 | 480 | 135 | 2230 | 995 | 3500 | 75 |
| XSR | 49,990* | L4TD/2.4 | A9 | 480 | 135 | 2230 | 875 | 3500 | 75 |

### TANK 300

The Tank 300's duo of 2.0-litre petrol-electric hybrid versions are now joined by two 2.0-litre petrol-only powered rigs at significantly lower asking prices.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lux | 46,990 | L4TD/2.4 | A9 | 480 | 135 | 2280 | 600 | 3000 | 75 |
| Ultra (petrol) | 50,990 | L4TP/2.0 | A8 | 380 | 162 | 2155 | 610 | 3000 | 75 |
| Ultra (diesel) | 55,990 | L4TD/2.4 | A9 | 480 | 135 | 2280 | 600 | 3000 | 75 |
| Ultra (hybrid) | 60,990 | L4HY/2.0 | A9 | 648 | 255 | 2335 | 600 | 3000 | 75 |

### TANK 500

The Tank 500 is aimed squarely at the family 4x4 market, currently dominated by Prado and Everest. With its competitive pricing, grunty hybrid powerplant and decent payload, it offers plenty.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lux | 66,490 | L4HY/2.0 | A9 | 648 | 255 | 2605 | 790 | 3000 | 80 |
| Ultra | 73,990 | L4HY/2.0 | A9 | 648 | 255 | 2605 | 790 | 3000 | 80 |
| Vanta | 75,990 | L4HY/2.0 | A9 | 648 | 255 | 2605 | 790 | 3000 | 80 |

## GMSV **www.gmspecialtyvehicles.com.au**

### CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500

For 2023 Chevrolet dropped the previous entry-level model, the LT Trail Boss. A new hero ZR2 model is now positioned at the top of the two-model range. Both powered by a 6.2-litre petrol V8.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LTZ | 130,500 | V8/6.2 | A10 | 624 | 313 | 2583 | 717 | 4200 | 91 |
| ZR2 | 138,000 | V8/6.2 | A10 | 624 | 313 | 2543 | 757 | 4500 | 91 |

## INEOS **www.ineosgrenadier.com/en/au/**

### GRENADIER

Ineos brings back the simple, durable 4x4 vehicle that adventurers and organisations want for serious off-road travel, available with both petrol and diesel powertrains and two-seat (2s) or five-seat (5s) interiors.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Utility wagon 2s | 104,000 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 450 | 210 | 2618 | 932 | 3500 | 90 |
| Fieldmaster 2s | 122,000 | I6D/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 183 | 2693 | 857 | 3500 | 90 |
| Trialmaster 2s | 122,000 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 450 | 210 | 2643 | 907 | 3500 | 90 |
| Station wagon 5s | 105,000 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 450 | 210 | 2643 | 907 | 3500 | 90 |
| Trialmaster 5s | 123,000 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 450 | 210 | 2643 | 907 | 3500 | 90 |
| Fieldmaster 5s | 123,000 | I6D/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 183 | 2718 | 832 | 3500 | 90 |

## ISUZU UTE 6-year/150,000km **www.isuzuute.com.au**

### D-MAX

D-MAX has cut its links with GM and is an all-Isuzu affair. The latest model is a huge step up with class-leading safety tech, more power and torque from the 3.0L, and fresh, aggressive styling.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SX Single c/c | 42,700 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1780 | 1310 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Space c/c | 48,200 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1860 | 1240 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-M Crew c/c | 54,300 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2030 | 1070 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U Crew c/c | 61,000 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1970 | 1130 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U Space p/u | 59,500 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2000 | 1100 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Crew c/c | 49,200 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1910 | 1190 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Crew p/u | 50,700 | I4TD/1.9 | A6 | 350 | 110 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 76 |
| SX Crew p/u | 52,700 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2035 | 1065 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-M Crew p/u | 55,800 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2030 | 1070 | 3500 | 76 |
| X-Rider Crew p/u | 59,500 | I4TD/3.0 | 6 | 450 | 140 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U Crew p/u | 59,000 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2045 | 1055 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U+ Crew p/u | 65,500 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2115 | 985 | 3500 | 76 |
| X-Terrain Crew p/u | 67,990 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2130 | 970 | 3500 | 76 |
| Blade Crew p/u | 76,990* | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 76 |

### MU-X

Isuzu's seven-seat wagon based on the D-MAX ute underpinnings, but with a smooth-riding coil-spring rear suspension. Buyers have the option of the tried-and-true 3.0-litre TD or new 1.9-litre oiler.

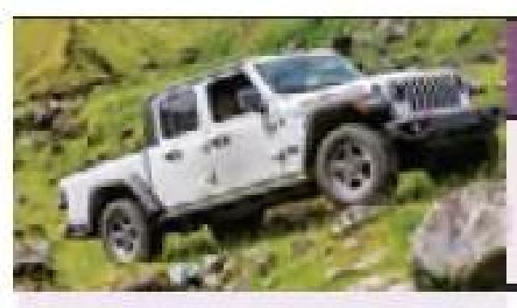
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LS-M | 53,400 | L4TD/1.9 | A6 | 350 | 110 | 2140 | 735 | 3000 | 80 |
| LS-M | 55,400 | L4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2092 | 658 | 3500 | 80 |
| LS-U | 59,900 | L4TD/1.9 | A6 | 350 | 110 | 2088 | 685 | 3000 | 80 |
| LS-U | 61,900 | L4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2142 | 608 | 3500 | 80 |
| LS-T | 67,990 | L4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2157 | 593 | 3500 | 80 |
| Tour Mate | | | | | | | | | |

# JEEP
5-year/unlimited km **www.jeep.com.au**

## WRANGLER

JL Wrangler has true off-road credentials and great versatility. In Rubicon-spec, the Wrangler is an absolute off-road weapon.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rubicon (2D) | 79,990 | I4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 200 | 1762 | 551 | 1497 | 81 |
| Sport S (4D) | 75,950 | I4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 200 | N/A | N/A | 2495 | 81 |
| Overland (4D) | 83,950 | I4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 200 | 1900 | 560 | 2495 | 81 |
| Rubicon (4D) | 82,990 | I4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 200 | 1992 | 570 | 2495 | 81 |



## GLADIATOR

Jeep's double-cab pick-up comes in two spec levels, with the Pentastar V6 and 8-speed auto in both. The Night Eagle is the entry level while the Rubicon is the better equipped off-roader.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Night Eagle | 78,250 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 347 | 209 | 2104 | 693 | 2721 | 83 |
| Rubicon | 82,990 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 347 | 209 | 2215 | 693 | 2721 | 83 |

# LAND ROVER
**www.landrover.com.au**

## DEFENDER 90

Defender 90 range closely mimics the 110 wagon range but in a shorter three-door wagon body. Right from the four-cylinder petrol motors, through the various diesels, and up to the stonking V8.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D90 P300 | 80,540 | I4/2.0P | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2074 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 S P300 | 88,870 | I4/2.0P | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2074 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 S D250 | 92,626 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 570 | 183 | 2303 | 667 | 3500 | 89 |
| D90 SE P400 | 110,870 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | 2141 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 X P400 | 154,546 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | 2141 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 P525 | 191,288 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 625 | 386 | 2470 | N/A | 3000 | 90 |

## DEFENDER 110

The 'new' Defender has been around for a while now, with incremental increases in power/torque outputs, engine options and (sadly) pricing along the way. Its bling exterior belies its off-road capability.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P400 S | 93,907 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 SE | 108,795 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 SE | 114,165 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 HSE | 128,815 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 HSE | 124,040 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 Trophy Ed. | 128,808 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 X | 157,224 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 Sedona Ed. | 134,706 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 X | 150,620 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400e SE | 126,275 | I4PH/2.0P | A8 | 640 | 297 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400e HSE | 137,975 | I4PH/2.0P | A8 | 640 | 297 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P425 SE | 127,100 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 550 | 313 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P425 HSE | 142,100 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 550 | 313 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P425 X | 172,600 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 550 | 313 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P635 OCTA | 304,500 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 750 | 467 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |

## DEFENDER 130

The largest-ever Defender is here and brings with it a lot more rear cargo space, along with some sweet powerplant options for this biggest of Brit off-roaders.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D350 X-Dyna SE | 136,000 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 Outbound | 141,600 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 700 | 257 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 X-Dyna SE | 133,471 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | NA | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 Outbound | 135,562 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P500 | 216,1970 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 610 | 368 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |

## DISCOVERY

Land Rover Discovery combines excellent on-road dynamics with impressive off-road capability. Strong performance comes via the choice of V6 turbo-diesel or V6 petrol powerplants.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D350 S Dynamic | 116,006 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 257 | 2109 | 831 | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 SE Dynamic | 123,564 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 257 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 HSE Dynam | 130,405 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 257 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 90 |
| D350 35th Anniv. | 133,176 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 257 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 90 |
| P360 S RDynamic | 121,539 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 90 |
| P360 SE Dynamic | 122,070 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 90 |
| P360 HSE Dynam | 128,430 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 90 |

## RANGE ROVER SPORT

There are six Rangie Sport models to choose from in this latest incarnation, with both the diesel (in three different outputs), and petrol powerplants featuring mild-hybrid tech.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D250 SE | 146,799 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 600 | 183 | 2390 | 830 | 3500 | 80 |
| D300 SE Dynamic | 159,481 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2390 | 830 | 3500 | 80 |
| D350 HSE Dyn | 177,847 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 258 | 2435 | 785 | 3500 | 80 |
| D350 Autobio | 197,176 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 225 | 2435 | 830 | 3500 | 80 |
| P360 SE Dynamic | 139,000 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2271 | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| P400 SE Dynamic | 160,576 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 294 | 2316 | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| P400 HSE Dyn | 172,676 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| P460 HSE Dyn | 181,018 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 660 | 338 | 2730 | 720 | 3500 | 80 |
| P460 Autobio | 204,596 | I6P/3.0 | A8 | 660 | 338 | 2730 | 720 | 3500 | 80 |
| P530 Autobio | 239,372 | V8TTP/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 390 | 2436 | 814 | 3500 | 80 |
| P635 SV Edition | 320,941 | V8TTP/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 467 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |

## RANGE ROVER

Bespoke personalisation and new hybrid powertrains herald in revised Range Rover line-up.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D350 HSE | 271,700 | I6/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 258 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| P460e HSE | 280,100 | I6e/3.0 | A8 | 660 | 338 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 72 |
| P460e LWB HSE | 288,500 | I6e/3.0 | A8 | 660 | 338 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 72 |
| P530 HSE | 282,500 | V8/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 390 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P460e Autobiog. | 296,427 | I6e/3.0 | A8 | 660 | 338 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 72 |
| D350 A/B | 298,659 | I6/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 258 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| P460e LWB A/B | 298,999 | I6e/3.0 | A8 | 660 | 338 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 72 |
| D350 LWB A/B | 304,530 | I6/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 258 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| D350 LWB 7s A/B | 306,075 | I6/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 258 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| P530 Autobiog. | 353,300 | V8/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 390 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P530 LWB A/B | 355,000 | V8/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 390 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P530 LWB 7s A/B | 339,314 | V8/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 390 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P615 SV | 411,600 | V8/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 452 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P615 LWB SV | 461,200 | V8/4.4 | A8 | 750 | 452 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |

# LDV
7-year/200,000km **www.ldvautomotive.com.au**

## T60

Chinese ute brings five-star safety to the budget-priced dual-cab segment. Revamped in 2021, with the Pro variants bringing more power and redesigned front-end.

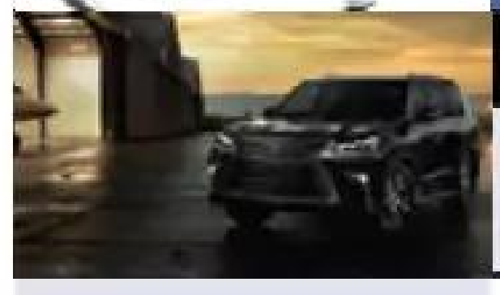
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Max Pro (manual) | 41,042 | I4/2.0 | M6 | 500 | 160 | N/A | 935 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Pro (auto) | 43,148 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | N/A | 925 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Luxe (manual) | 45,779 | I4/2.0 | M6 | 500 | 160 | N/A | 935 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Luxe (auto) | 47,884 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | 2900 | 925 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Luxe Mega Tub | 49,463 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | 2900 | 925 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Plus (manual) | 48,411 | I4/2.0 | M6 | 500 | 160 | 2900 | 925 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Plus Mega Tub | 52,095 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 73 |

## TERRON 9

LDV's new workhorse brings big size and load capacity to the competitve 4x4 dual-cab ute market, bulking up larger than a HiLux. As well as a punchy 2.5TD, it offers plenty of interior space.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Origin | 53,674 | I4/2.5 | A8 | 520 | 163 | 2400 | 1100 | 3500 | 80 |
| Evolve | 58,937 | I4/2.5 | A8 | 520 | 163 | 2400 | 1100 | 3500 | 80 |

# LEXUS
5-year/unlimited **www.lexus.com.au**



## LX

Now with two powerplant options – the diesel is a trick twin-turbo V6; the petrol is rorty, if not as glorious as the previous-gen V8 – and improved dynamics, this is now capital "L" for luxury with bite.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LX500 | 158,700 | V6TTD/3.3 | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2690 | TBC | 3500 | 80 |
| LX500 SL | 176,300 | V6TTD/3.3 | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2690 | TBC | 3500 | 80 |
| LX500 SL (7-seat) | 178,900 | V6TTD/3.3 | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2690 | TBC | 3500 | 80 |
| LX500 F Sport | 182,300 | V6TTD/3.3 | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2690 | TBC | 3500 | 80 |
| LX500 Overtrail | 182,300 | V6TTD/3.3 | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2690 | TBC | 3500 | 80 |
| LX600 | 162,200 | V6TTP/3.5 | A10 | 650 | 305 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 110 |
| LX600 SL | 179,800 | V6TTP/3.5 | A10 | 650 | 305 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 110 |
| LX600 SL (7-seat) | 183,600 | V6TTP/3.5 | A10 | 650 | 305 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 110 |
| LX600 F Sport | 185,800 | V6TTP/3.5 | A10 | 650 | 305 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 110 |
| LX600 Overtrail | 185,800 | V6TTP/3.5 | A10 | 650 | 305 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 110 |
| LX600 Ultra Lux | 220,950 | V6TTP/3.5 | A10 | 650 | 305 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 110 |

# MAHINDRA

5-year/unlimited **www.mahindra.com.au**

## PIK-UP

Now dual-cab only and still with the option of tub or no tub, this tough and reliable farm truck is proving popular out bush and is good bang for your workhorse bucks.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dual Cab | 39,990* | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 330 | 103 | 1940 | 1210 | 2500 | 80 |

## SCORPIO

It may be missing some key safety technology, but the Scorpio six-seater isn't just a good value-for-money package, it's a good rig overall.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Z8 | 41,990* | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 129 | 1900 | 525 | 2500 | 57 |
| Z8L | 44,990* | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 129 | 2100 | 510 | 2500 | 57 |

*This is a nationwide drive-away price, not a list price, and includes on-roads.

# MAZDA

5-year/unlimited km **www.mazda.com.au**

## BT-50

The BT-50 has stepped away from its Ford roots, as Mazda partnered with Isuzu for the new model. That means Isuzu powertrains and class-leading safety wrapped in a svelte Mazda skin.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dual XS p/u | 52,930 | I4TD/1.9 | A6 | 350 | 110 | 1935 | 1165 | 3500 | 76 |
| Single XT c/c | 43,520 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1186 | 3500 | 76 |
| Single XT c/c | 47,250 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1186 | 3500 | 76 |
| Extra XT c/c | 47,020 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1135 | 3500 | 76 |
| Extra XT c/c | 51,000 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1135 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT c/c | 54,620 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1096 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT c/c | 51,330 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1106 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT p/u | 52,730 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1095 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT p/u | 56,220 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1090 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XTR c/c | 57,880 | I4TD./.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1910 | 1190 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XTR p/u | 56,780 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1080 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XTR p/u | 62,750 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1070 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual GT p/u | 57,090 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1075 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual GT p/u | 66,170 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1065 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual SP p/u | 63,090 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2198 | 902 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual SP p/u | 71,500 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2208 | 892 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual Thunder p/u | 74,095 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2213 | 887 | 3500 | 76 |

# MERCEDES

3-year/200,000km **www.mercedes-benz.com.au**

## G-CLASS

With triple diff locks, long-travel coil suspension and rugged construction, Merc's Gelandewagen is off-road heritage writ large. Unfortunately, so is the price tag on an updated 30-year-old design.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G63 AMG | 259,600 | V8/4.0 | A9 | 850 | 430 | 2560 | 640 | 3500 | 100 |
| G400d | 233,776 | I6/2.9 | A9 | 700 | 243 | 2489 | 661 | 3500 | 112 |

# MITSUBISHI

7-year/150,000km **www.mitsubishi-motors.com.au**

## PAJERO SPORT

Pajero Sport replaced the Challenger in Mitsubishi's 4x4 range. It's still on a Triton ute chassis but with rear coils under the back and bespoke bodywork. 2020 refresh added Dynamic Shield front end.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GLX (5-seat) | 51,540 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2145 | 630 | 3100 | 68 |
| GLS (7s) | 56,890 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2195 | 580 | 3100 | 68 |
| GLS Deluxe (7s) | 57,440 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2204 | 571 | 3100 | 68 |
| Exceed (7s) | 62,590 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2209 | 566 | 3100 | 68 |
| GSR (7s) | 64,840 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2209 | 566 | 3100 | 68 |

## TRITON

This is the sixth incarnation of Triton, with plenty of new kit, including a sweet twin-turbo diesel engine, more bluff exterior styling, and improved interior.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GLX Single c/c | 41,840 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 470 | 150 | 1870 | 1330 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX Single c/c | 41,840 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 1865 | 1335 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX Club c/c | 47,240 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 1957 | 1243 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX Dual c/c | 47,240 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 1993 | 1207 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX Club p/u | 50,340 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2089 | 1111 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX+ Dual c/c | 51,990 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 1991 | 1209 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLS Dual c/c | 57,540 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 1990 | 1210 | 3500 | 75 |
| GSR Dual c/c | 61,540 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2006 | 1194 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX Dual p/u | 50,940 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2117 | 1083 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX+ Dual p/u | 53,290 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2108 | 1092 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLX-R Dual p/u | 56,740 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2107 | 1093 | 3500 | 75 |
| GLS Dual p/u | 59,090 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2129 | 951 | 3500 | 75 |
| GSR | 63,840 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 470 | 150 | 2170 | 910 | 3500 | 75 |

# NISSAN

5-year/unlimited km **www.nissan.com.au**

## PATROL Y62

In a segment that drinks diesel, top-spec Patrol is available in V8-petrol guise only. Fully independent suspension is backed by electronic traction aids.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ti | 90,600 | V8/5.6 | A7 | 560 | 298 | 2812 | 688 | 3500 | 140 |
| Ti-L | 102,100 | V8/5.6 | A7 | 560 | 298 | 2708 | 746 | 3500 | 140 |
| PRO-4X Warrior | 105,660 | V8/5.6 | A7 | 560 | 289 | 2884 | 736 | 3500 | 140 |

## NAVARA D23

The latest iteration of Nissan's D23 Navara ute range arrives with a bolder look and a revised line-up. Pro-4X Warrior has to be the best navara produced ever!.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single SL c/c | 43,428 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| King SL c/c | 47,428 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 403 | 120 | 1727 | 1183 | 3500 | 80 |
| King SL p/u | 49,228 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1941 | 969 | 3500 | 80 |
| King ST-X p/u | 59,323 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1944 | 966 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL c/c | 46,428 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 403 | 120 | 1759 | 1147 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL p/u | 48,228 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1823 | 1087 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual ST p/u | 53,333 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual ST-X p/u | 56,823 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1917 | 993 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual ST-X p/u | 58,270 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1921 | 989 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL Warrior | 59,628 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 2169 | 1081 | 3500 | 80 |
| PRO-4X | 59,783 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2137 | 1013 | 3500 | 80 |
| PRO-4X | 62,283 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 2146 | 1004 | 3500 | 80 |
| PRO-4X Warrior | 69,143 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2289 | 961 | 3500 | 80 |
| PRO-4X Warrior | 71,643 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 2298 | 952 | 3500 | 80 |

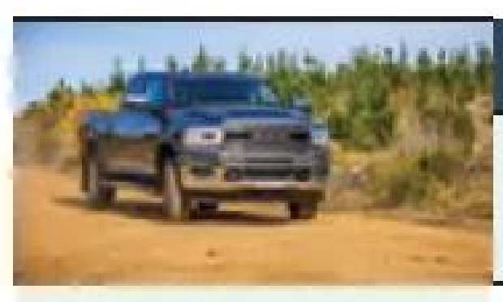
# RAM

3-year/100,000 km **www.ramtrucks.com.au**

## RAM 1500

You'll find Ram trucks here from various importers, but the official distributor is Ram Trucks Australia. Currently selling the DT Ram 1500.

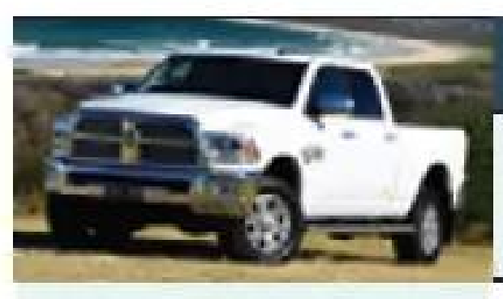
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Laramie | 137,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2617 | 833 | 4500 | 98 |
| Laramie Sport | 141,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2671 | 779 | 4500 | 98 |
| Big Horn | 119,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | N/A | N/A | 4500 | 98 |
| Limited | 156,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2749 | 701 | 4500 | 98 |
| TRX | 224,950 | V8P/6.2 | A8 | 882 | 523 | 3033 | 767 | 3500 | 125 |



## RAM 2500

The 2500 is the first of the heavy duty Ram models and is only available in Laramie specification in Australia. Powered by the Cummins in-line six, the 2500 is a torque monster and towing champion.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2500 Laramie | 172,950 | I6d/6.7 | A6 | 1152 | 276 | 3660 | 835 | 4500 | 117 |



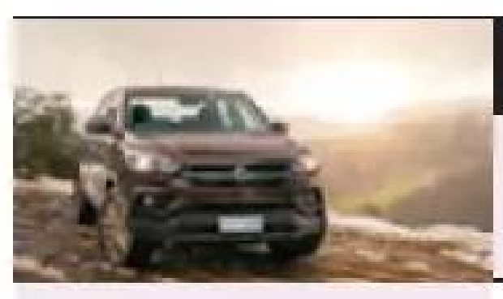
## RAM 3500

The 1500 is the standard model while the 2500 and 3500 Rams are the Heavy Duty versions packing HD drivelines, Cummins diesel engines and huge lowing capacities. New HD models also coming soon.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Laramie Crew | 177,950 | I6TD/6.7 | A6 | 1152 | 276 | 3596 | 1713 | 6170* | 132 |

# KGM

7-year/unlimited km **www.kgm.com.au**



## MUSSO

Thrifty South Korean dual-cab has been reborn with more subdued styling and an unbeatable warranty. XLV variant adds segment-topping tray length to the line-up's killer pricing.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EX | 30,490 | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 400 | 133 | 2177 | 703 | 3500 | 75 |
| EX | 32,490 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2192 | 688 | 3500 | 75 |
| ELX | 40,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2192 | 688 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultimate | 45,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2192 | 688 | 3500 | 75 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ELX XLV | 33,990 | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 400 | 133 | 2160 | 1025 | 3500 | 75 |
| ELX XLV | 41,500 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2170 | 1025 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultimate XLV | 46,500 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2170 | 880 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultimate Luxury | 48,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2170 | 880 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ult. Luxury XLV | 49,500 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 400 | 133 | 2170 | 880 | 3500 | 75 |

### REXTON

The South Korean manufacturer's large wagon now has three variants and a smooth-shifting eight-speed auto gear box. It is loaded with kit and comes with a lean price tag.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ELX | 50,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A8 | 441 | 148 | 2233 | 727 | 3500 | 70 |
| Adventure | 54,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A8 | 441 | 148 | 2233 | 727 | 3500 | 70 |
| Ultimate | 58,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A8 | 441 | 148 | 2233 | 727 | 3500 | 70 |
| Ultimate Sport | 60,000 | L4TD/2.2 | A8 | 441 | 148 | 2233 | 727 | 3500 | 70 |

## SUZUKI

3-year/100,000km **www.suzuki.com.au**

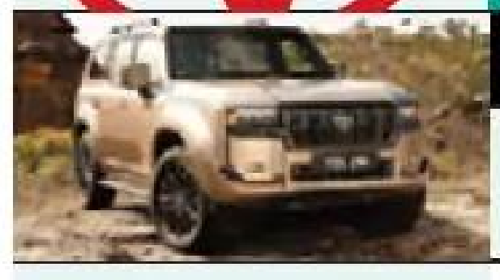
### JIMNY

Pint-sized cult classic returns in fourth-gen guise. Live axles front and rear and retro styling means it will remain a favourite on the off-road scene.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3-door Hardtop | 28,490 | L4/1.5 | M5 | 130 | 75 | 1095 | 340 | 1300 | 40 |
| 3-door Hardtop | 29,990 | L4/1.5 | A4 | 130 | 75 | 1110 | 325 | 1300 | 40 |

## TOYOTA

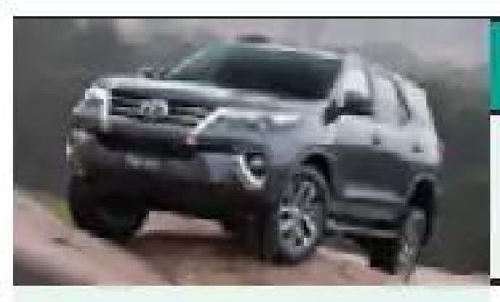
5-year/unlimited km **www.toyota.com.au**



### PRADO

The all-new 250 Prado is here. It is porkier than the 150, has lower payloads, less fuel capacity, higher tow-rating, the 2.8TD donk carries over, and prices have jumped, so it's a curious mix. Will sell like crazy.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GX | 72,500 | I4TD/2.8 | A8 | 500 | 150 | 2495 | 605 | 3500 | 110 |
| GXL | 79,990 | I4TD/2.8 | A8 | 500 | 150 | 2535 | 615 | 3500 | 110 |
| VX | 87,400 | I4TD/2.8 | A8 | 500 | 150 | 2570 | 610 | 3500 | 110 |
| Altitude | 92,700 | I4TD/2.8 | A8 | 500 | 150 | 2520 | 660 | 3500 | 110 |
| Kakadu | 99,990 | I4TD/2.8 | A8 | 500 | 150 | 2595 | 605 | 3500 | 110 |



### FORTUNER

Toyota's HiLux-based seven-seat wagon competes with Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and Isuzu MU-X. Smaller than a Prado but still a proper 4x4 wagon.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GX | 53,775 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2175 | 625 | 3100 | 80 |
| GXL | 58,895 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2185 | 615 | 3100 | 80 |
| Crusade | 66,755 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2190 | 610 | 3100 | 80 |

### LAND CRUISER 300 SERIES

It's out with the V8s and in with an all-new V6 diesel engine in the new 300 Series Land Cruiser. There are now six models in the range including the new GR Sport and Sahara ZX models.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | –TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GX | 97,990 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2495 | 785 | 3500 | 110 |
| GXL | 110,820 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2580 | 700 | 3500 | 110 |
| VX | 122,510 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2630 | 650 | 3500 | 110 |
| Sahara | 139,310 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2630 | 650 | 3500 | 110 |
| GR Sport | 146,160 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2630 | 650 | 3500 | 110 |
| Sahara ZX | 146,910 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2610 | 670 | 3500 | 110 |

### LAND CRUISER 70

The 70 Series Cruiser has built a reputation as a load-hauler extraordinaire. Available as long-wheelbase Troopie or five-door, mid-wheelbase wagon.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WorkMate Troopy | 77,200 | I4TD/2.8 | M5 | 450 | 150 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 130 |
| GXL Troopy | 80,500 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2360 | 1115 | 3500 | 130 |
| WorkMate wagon | 75,600 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2320 | 1190 | 3500 | 130 |
| GXL Wagon | 77,800 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2300 | 1210 | 3500 | 130 |

### LAND CRUISER 70 CAB-CHASSIS

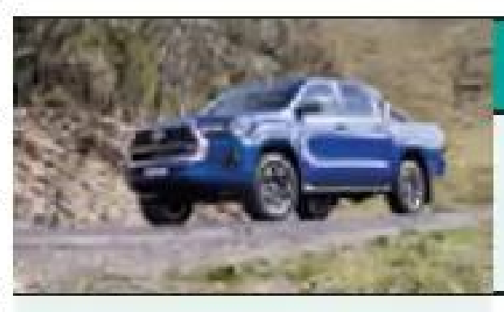
Still the king of the country when it comes to a reliable workhorse. Safety updates and that steady 2.8TD with six-speed auto is a winning combo.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WorkMate single c/c | 76,800 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2145 | 1365 | 3500 | 130 |
| GX single c/c | 78,800 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2130 | 1380 | 3500 | 130 |
| GXL single c/c | 80,900 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2130 | 1380 | 3500 | 130 |

### LAND CRUISER 79 DOUBLE CAB

Tough-as-nails and with room for five, the LC79 dual-cab uses the 2.8TD engine backed by a smooth-shifting six-speed auto (for $2k less, you can opt for a five-speed manual).

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WorkMate dual c/c | 77,300 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2205 | 1310 | 3500 | 130 |
| GXL dual c/c | 81,500 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2185 | 1325 | 3500 | 130 |



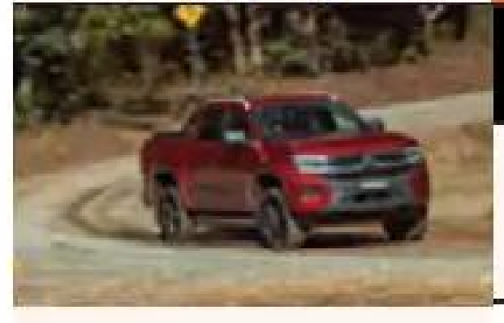
### HILUX

The N80 Hilux with a new 2.8-litre engine, six-speed transmissions and a beefed-up towing capacity. A facelift and more power for the 2021 model adds to its appeal.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W'Mate Single c/c | 40,965 | I4TD/2.4 | M6 | 400 | 110 | 1775 | 1225 | 3200 | 80 |
| W'Mate Extra c/c | 46,665 | I4TD/2.4 | A6 | 400 | 110 | 1890 | 1110 | 3000 | 80 |
| W'Mate Dual c/c | 48,735 | I4TD/2.4 | A6 | 400 | 110 | 1915 | 1085 | 3000 | 80 |
| W'Mate Dual p/u | 48,235 | I4TD/2.4 | M6 | 400 | 110 | 2045 | 955 | 3200 | 80 |
| W'Mate Dual p/u | 50,420 | I4TD/2.4 | A6 | 400 | 110 | 2045 | 955 | 3000 | 80 |
| SR Single c/c | 44,035 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 1795 | 1205 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Single c/c | 44,590 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 1795 | 1205 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR Extra c/c | 48,695 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 1890 | 1110 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Extra c/c | 48,695 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 1895 | 1155 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR Dual c/c | 50,955 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 1955 | 1045 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Dual c/c | 54,130 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 1955 | 1045 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR Dual p/u | 52,640 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 2050 | 950 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Dual p/u | 56,210 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2045 | 955 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR5 Extra p/u | 60,250 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2045 | 1005 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR5 Dual p/u | 60,670 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 2040 | 960 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR5 Dual p/u | 63,260 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2045 | 955 | 3200 | 80 |
| Rogue Dual p/u | 71,530 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2174 | 826 | 3200 | 80 |
| Rugged X Dual p/u | 69,990 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2252 | 748 | 3200 | 80 |
| GR Sport | 73,990 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 550 | 165 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |

## VOLKSWAGEN

5-year/unlimited km **www.volkswagen.com.au**



### AMAROK

The second-gen Amarok shares much of its underpinnings with the next-gen Ford Ranger. Four engines are on offer in the line-up including the V6 shared with the Ford, as well as a 2.3-litre petrol.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TDI405 Core | 50,990 | L4TD/2.0 | M6 | 405 | 125 | 2185 | 1065 | 3500 | 80 |
| TDI405 Core | 52,990 | L4TD/2.0 | A6 | 405 | 125 | 2208 | 1042 | 3500 | 80 |
| TDI500 Life 2.0 | 56,990 | L4TD/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2242 | 988 | 3500 | 80 |
| TDI500 Style | 66,990 | L4TD/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2271 | 1009 | 3500 | 80 |
| TDI600 Style | 70,990 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2319 | 1031 | 3500 | 80 |
| TDI600 PanAm | 75,990 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2319 | 1031 | 3500 | 80 |
| TDI600 Aventura | 79,990 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2332 | 858 | 3500 | 80 |
| TSI452 Aventura | 79,990 | L4P/2.3 | A8 | 452 | 222 | 2228 | 872 | 3500 | 80 |

# G 450 D LANDS AT $214,900+ORC

Mercedes-Benz has updated the diesel-fuelled G-Wagen with the arrival of the G 450 d, priced from $214,900 (excluding on-road and dealer delivery costs).

Joining the all-electric EQG and high-performance AMG G 63 variants, the G 450 d pairs the G-Wagen's renowned off-road capability with the efficiency and torque of a six-cylinder diesel engine – just as God intended it to have.

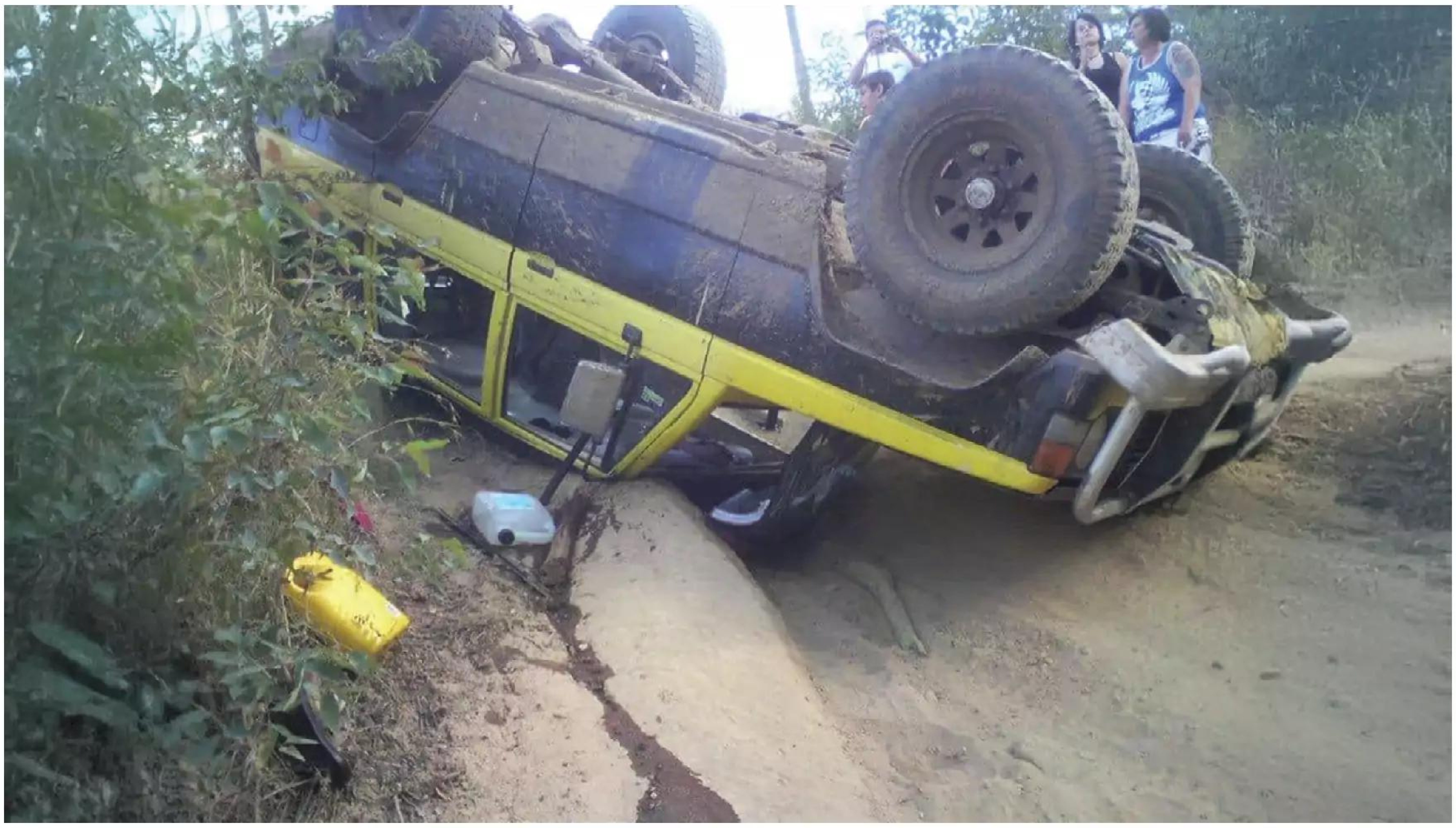
Under the bonnet, a 3.0-litre inline six-cylinder engine works with an integrated starter-generator and 48-volt mild-hybrid system to deliver claimed peaks of 270kW and 750Nm.

The G 450 d retains its traditional ladder-frame chassis and three mechanical locking differentials. Off-road credentials include 241mm of ground clearance, 700mm of fording depth, stable performance on side slopes up to 35 degrees, and approach and departure angles of 31 and 30 degrees respectively.

The G450d is the thinking man's G-Wagen; it brings style, performance and capability without the unwanted gangster vibe.

# PARTING PIC

SEND TO OUR FB PAGE: @4X4AUS



## KEEP ON ROLLIN'

### RODNEY GILKISON

> GLASSHOUSE MOUNTAINS, QLD

Off-roading can be unpredictable, even on terrain you've tackled before. Rodney Gilkison knows this all too well from an experience years ago in the Glasshouse Mountains in Queensland.

The Glasshouse Mountains, a striking range of volcanic peaks, are located about 70km north of Brisbane. Known for their steep slopes, rugged tracks and loose gravel, the mountains are a popular destination for 4x4 enthusiasts looking for a mix of challenging trails and scenic views.

"We were out at Glasshouse Mountains," Rodney recalled. "This hill, we actually drove up the day before, but as we started descending, the back wheel slid into a deep hole full of fine gravel and dust…"

The Patrol slowly rolled onto its roof, a stark reminder that even familiar tracks can turn treacherous in an instant.

However, the drama didn't end there. "As we pulled it over onto its wheels, it took off down the hill into a huge gum tree," Rodney explained.

Despite the rollover and collision, Rodney and his crew managed to get it running again and drove it home. A good reminder of the resilience of older 4x4s!

**THE PATROL SLOWLY ROLLED ONTO ITS ROOF, A STARK REMINDER THAT EVEN FAMILIAR TRACKS CAN TURN TREACHEROUS IN AN INSTANT**

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# LATEST PRODUCTS

## *Piranha Off Road Bullbar Next Gen Ford Ranger (2022+)*

Take your Next Gen Ford Ranger (2022+) to the next level with the all-new Piranha Off Road Bullbar. Built with strength and safety in mind, this bar has been ADR tested and complies with all Australian Safety Standards.

Tough, stylish and functional, it's designed for serious off road enthusiasts and features LED Fog Lights, 3-piece protection plates, provision for spot lights and is engineered to withstand the harshest conditions.

## *Tru Vision 9 Inch Driving Light Kit*

### *with Harness & Black Out Covers*

Recognised as "Best Value for Money" by 4x4 Australia Magazine and designed for extreme environments, these 14,400 lumen lights feature a durable lens and rugged alloy housing.

See what 4x4 Australia Magazine had to say:

*"...forget about pricing and look at the beam of this light, it impresses all round."*

*"These are by far the cheapest on the test, but wait for it... a damn good light!"*

Engineered for 4WD, touring, and off-road enthusiasts, illuminate the road ahead with Tru Vision's premium lighting solution.

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